THE MOTTO:

OR

HISTORY

OF

BILL WOODCOCK.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

GEORGE BREWER.

VOL. I.

'Fata viam invenient.'
Fate the way will find.

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INTRODUCTION.

TO ſuch as are inſenſible to the exiſtence of a ruling Providence in the contingencies of human life, or to ſuch as believe her interpoſition, this hiſtory may be of ſervice; it may go ſome way towards convincing the firſt, of what they perhaps have never yet been awakened to, and will afford an example to the laſt, to perſevere in that hope, which, to the good, ſeldom cheers

the gloom of diſappointment and ſorrow, without one day or other entirely diſpelling it,---to the bad, it will afford a leſſon, that the conſequences of vice and indiſcretion muſt, and will, at laſt arrive, and that there is no way to mitigate the ſentence but atonement and repentance.

'The path to peace, is virtue, what I ſhow.'
Thyſelf, may freely, on thyſelf, beſtow.
DRY. JUV.

A leſſon, which it is hoped will, even in this age of 'indifference,' be acceptable to ſome few; that it may be uſeful to many, is the moſt ſincere wiſh of an author, who deſires eſteem

eſteem more than popularity; for, ſhould theſe volumes give ſatisfaction to a few good judges, and afford inſtruction and amuſement to a few rational individuals, he will be prouder in the diſtinction, than of a character raiſed by writing for a *falſe* and depraved *taſte*, which has already reigned too long, and muſt ſoon be ſucceeded by the reſtoration of genius and good ſenſe, or the almoſt utter extinction of both.

'Laudare et Laudator Viro.'

Nor will it, I truſt, with the liberal mind, take from me, to have been the author of '*How to be happy*;' the ſhaft of malevolence has had its

deſired

deſired effect, and the firſt dramatic attempt of a young author, in an enlightened age, has fallen to the ground without ever having been condemned by an audience, or diſapproved by the liberal critic. The reaſon of that comedy's having been withdrawn, and of its never having been publiſhed, is known to very few, and, perhaps, it is as well, ſince the world are always ready to doubt the juſtneſs of remonſtrances which come from a diſappointed author; tho' already, in the private circles of literature, has candour wondered at the cauſe, and given me a ſmall tribute of praiſe in deſpite of the character it had received.

ceived. It was ſomewhat curious, however, that the prologue, which was not publicly known to be mine, was praiſed abundantly in two different papers, one of which ſaid, 'that, as for the prologue, like all 'other of Mr. Colman's produc-'tions, it was excellent;' and another very generouſly aſcribed it to a Mr. Upton; thus did I obtain a ſmall ſhare of unintentional praiſe, amidſt the rancour of unfair criticiſm; the only gratification I had to leſſen the force of diſappointment, was the liberal concern of Mr. Colman, who, I am ſure, felt for my ill treatment, and the attentions of the moſt reſpect-

able

able of the performers——Pardon, gentle reader, a digreſſion, which comes from the heart, and is directed only to ſuch as can *feel*.

To give a faithful picture of real life, to convey inſtruction, to amuſe, to involve the reader in adventure and viciſſitude, to excite joy and grief, to cauſe the tear of ſenſibility to flow, and to awaken the mind to humanity and benevolence; and, laſtly, to give virtue its reward, is the *buſineſs* of a Novel,---when fiction is made to do this, the critic, too much pleaſed to condemn, will

'Survey the whole, nor ſeek ſlight faults to find.'
Where nature moves and rapture charms the mind.

POPE.

Should

Should the following pages go a little way to do good, and to entertain, throw me, ye arbitrators of wit and judgment, a ſmall ſprig of laurel from the Mount of Parnaſſus, that I may ſay, while I repeat, with veneration, the names of Fielding and Smollet,

'I alſo am an author.'

'But next, with many a length between.'

PITT's TRAN. VIR. ÆNEID.

THE MOTTO.

CHAP. I.

An account of my birth, with a deſcription of the place of my nativity, and of the claſs of beings among whom I had the good or ill fortune to be introduced.

IT ſeems that I came into the world in a barn, ſituated by an old and ruinous farm houſe, in the village of Swinbroke, near Burford, in Oxfordſhire, which had been periodically, time out of mind, one of thoſe temples of Theſpis to be found in every county, for the refinement of the manners and the propagation of taſte: to be more explicit, the granary which introduced me to the world, had from ancient cuſ-

tom and the ſanction of Mr. Gobble, a juſtice of the peace at Burford, been uſed for many years before my birth as a theatre, and was occaſionally fitted up with every neceſſary accommodation for a group of itinerant performers who reſorted annually to the ſpot.

Our company conſiſted, at the earlieſt time to which I can carry back my recollection, of the following very extraordinary and diſtinguiſhed characters. Mr. Climax, our manager, a little diſagreeable old man, lame of one leg, and poſſeſſed of a certain monotony of voice, the conſequence of imitating the defects of a very great performer at one of the London theatres, where Mr. Climax himſelf once had a trial part, which I believe was Richard the third; our little manager, however, ſeldom *diſcanted* on this particular æra of his hiſtory; for what reaſon, it may not be difficult to imagine. Mr. Climax had not-

notwithſtanding many qualifications for an actor; he was well acquainted with what is called mumming, or in other words the art of getting applauſe from the galleries, at the expenſe of truth and nature, beſides being a maſter of ſtage trick and ſituation. Thus accompliſhed he was almoſt as great and inacceſſible as a London manager, except when his good nature or his glaſs opened the correſpondence with his inferiors. Mr. Charles Beaumont was the next performer of rank in our company, he held the firſt caſt of characters, and was eſteemed, (I mean among us), a great tragedian: this young gentleman had formerly, as I have been told, filled with ſome ſucceſs the part of a hair-dreſſer under the Piazzas, Covent Garden, but, fortunately for the public, having an order given him one night for the two ſhilling gallery to hear Hamlet's 'to be, or not to be,' he was preſently determined that he *would be* a

player: he now felt the full force of the theatrical talent ſtruggling to get thro' the ſhackles of his education and profeſſion; he could no longer ſee his curling irons, his pomatum, and his powder bag, with patience; in ſhort, he held them in ſuch contempt, that the ſhop was always left unſwept, the raſors ruſty, and the wigs in an ominous and melancholy diſorder, till at laſt one morning this natural ſon of Theſpis ſet out to join Mr. Climax's company with only a clean ſhirt, a few neck handkerchiefs, and Oroonoko in his pocket.

The reſt of the company conſiſted of Harry Clement, a young gentleman who had run away from his friends; Mr. Montague, who had been a man milliner, and Mr. Cowdell, who was, at once taylor, painter, and prompter; one-eyed Williams who led the band, and David Dobbins,

ſcene

ſcene ſhifter, candle ſnuffer, call boy, and property man. The ladies were, Mrs. Climax, a very fat corpulent woman, who ſometimes performed Juliet and Deſdemona; Mrs. Montagu, the hoyden of the company; Miſs Wilſon, and Mrs. Woodcock, my mother; all theſe ladies, I believe, excepting the laſt, had formerly filled the characters of milliners apprentices, embroiderers, and tambour workers in the great metropolis.

The ſinging parts in our little theatre were ſomewhat judiciouſly given to a Mr. Huſky, who was conſidered a very fine baſe; Dennis Mac Noggan, a Scotch piper, who had a good ear, and called himſelf Signior Dulcheſi, and Madame St. Roſamond, from Munſter, who had formerly ſold oranges at the Dublin playhouſe door, in Smock Alley.

I was about eight years of age, when the little talents I poſſeſſed as a child were turned to advantage, and I made my *debut* with my mother, in the tragedy of Iſabella; my next performance was to ſpeak an occaſional prologue, in which I came off with great eclat and ſhowers of halfpence; this obtained me the notice and protection of Mr. Climax the manager, who propheſied that I ſhould one day make a firſt-rate performer; notwithſtanding which encouragement, I felt a diſguſt for my profeſſion from infancy, and a conſtant and increaſing timidity, not eaſily to be got over, my mind even at that age was of a ſerious and contemplative turn, and though I might ſometimes be thought to have comic humour, it was of that ſort which promiſed to make the author, rather than the player.

My mother, who was a great favourite with Mr. Climax, and who performed almoſt

moſt all the principal women's characters, was a tall genteel-looking woman, of an exceeding mild and reſerved diſpoſition; in her countenance nature laid her claims to beauty through a maſk of ſorrow and diſappointment; her face was a perfect medallion of good nature, to which her heart had given the impreſſion. Though a certain dignity appeared in every thing ſhe ſaid or did, her manners were gentle and kind, and engaged every body to love her, while on her abilities the ſucceſs of our little theatre almoſt entirely depended. Thus much I believe I may ſay of my mother, without affection offending truth.

The hiſtory of Mrs. Woodcock was not at all known, except from the time when ſhe firſt joined the company at Burford, when, as I have been told, ſhe was with child of me, and coming a ſtranger

into the town deſtitute and friendleſs, her ſituation and deportment ſo far ſucceeded with Mr. Climax, that he accepted at once thoſe ſervices through humanity, from which he afterwards found ſo great an intereſt; it is but juſtice to his memory to ſay, that in ſpite of a little ſourneſs and pride of ſituation, diſtreſs could always recall feelings to his breaſt, that were an honour to human nature.

The fugitive of misfortune had never been rejected by Joſeph Climax.

Philoſophy is never more pleaſed, than when it finds a good principle burſting through the cloud of human frailties; it is then that we are proud of our inquiries, and aſſert with delight the glory and the goodneſs of the Creator.

It was happy for me, that during the moments of leiſure my mother had from her

her theatrical occupations, ſhe employed herſelf in the care of my education, of which ſhe very was capable; ſhe underſtood to a degree of perfection moſt of the moder. languages, was an excellent judge of muſic, poetry and painting, and the Belles Lettres, and was well acquainted with ancient and modern hiſtory, beſides a knowledge of the world, which ſeemed to have been obtained from the unerring leſſons of adverſity, and occaſioned her frequently to make many obſervations on men and manners, well calculated to inform me of the troubles and viciſſitudes I had to expect in life; for ſhe knew by experience that I was about to engage in a troubleſome world; and that fortune had placed me in no very advantageous ſituation, to contend with the difficulties that muſt neceſſarily be placed in my way, ſhould any thing happen to deſtroy our little ſociety.

Religion was ſo pure and natural in my mother's breaſt, that, though placed in a line of life almoſt inimical to the ſtrict adherence of propriety, ſhe never remitted her devotions, in the exerciſe of which her principal conſolation and happineſs ſeemed to be placed: ſhe appeared tired of a world capable of affording no permanent enjoyment, and ſought in the reſources her faith afforded ſomething beyond this life.

My mother when occaſion would permit, never failed to imprint on my tender memory the idea of a kind, benevolent and all powerful Being, on whoſe goodneſs and providence I had only to depend. She has often, when attending to my childiſh amuſements, mingled a look of anguiſh in her ſmiles that at once expreſſed pain and delight: why this unfair mixture ſhould be found in a breaſt ſo placed and harm-

harmleſs, remains yet to be unravelled, unpitied it cannot, ſince humanity muſt ſurely feel moſt for that ſecret ſorrow that loads itſelf with its own ills, and pines away under the weight, without ſcarcely remonſtrating againſt the cruelty of fortune, or even ſeeking a partner to ſhare its miſeries.

The general reſerve that hung about my mother's deportment did not, however, occaſion her to be diſliked in the company in which ſhe had engaged, for it appeared very plainly that it was the melancholy effect of a too ſenſible mind reviewing almoſt conſtantly a train of ſome paſt unpleaſant recollections, which deſtroyed her peace, and not the reſult of either pride or ill nature.

CHAP. II.

A ſomewhat extraordinary character, in which it will appear that honeſty is not always the beſt recommendation in the world.

AMONG thoſe in our little company who were moſt particularly attached to Mrs. Woodcock's intereſts, was David Dobbins, already I believe partly introduced to the reader as ſcene ſhifter, &c. This honeſt, faithful fellow had expreſſed his regard for my mother in a number of inſtances, ſuch as conſtantly writing out her parts, keeping ſober when it was her benefit, and having his ſcenery and properties in the beſt order and arrangement for the night, beſides ſitting up with

with me if I was ill, or carrying me when a child two or three miles along a croſs country road. All which little ſervices he did with as much good nature and cheerfulneſs as if he had been paid for his labour. David was in height ſomething above the middle ſize, his legs formed the ſegments of a circle, well calculated to ſupport an athletic body, and his ſhoulders meaſured a conſiderable width acroſs; he had in his youth been a great boxer, not as our modern pugiliſts for money or fame, but to take the weaker ſide, and battle with oppreſſion; one of his cheeks bore the unequivocal marks of a broken jaw, which cauſed a depreſſion of the left ſide of the lip, not a little aſſiſted, by the preſſure of the neck of a bottle frequently applied to the ſame point of incidence; his eyes were ſmall and round, and ſcarcely at all luminous except when the latent ſpark was called forth by the

aſſiſ-

aſſiſtance of a glaſs of brandy, or other ſpirituous liquor; his cheeks were jolly, his noſe of the true Roman ſtandard, and his face altogether the moſt perfect picture of humour, content, and good-nature; a phyſiognomiſt could not have diſcovered a ſingle trait to his diſadvantage: it was not ſo with his diſpoſition, for he poſſeſt a virtue, which ſtrange as it may appear, had ever acted againſt him in life. It was *honeſty*. Poor David, though he had a great deal of natural good ſenſe, was very unequal to the world; it was, however, happy for him that he had a very uncommon ſhare of philoſophy, and ſo cheerful a heart, that it triumphed over all the little accidents and miſhaps he was conſtantly meeting with. Humility had ſpread her ſhield before him, ſo that he felt not the keen arrows of adverſity, which could not affect either his pride or his fortune. If David was poor, he ſmiled at

the

the incidents of poverty; if what he called rich, he ridiculed the follies of proſperity. With a very juſt and happy idea of human life, he would frequently with great pleaſantry obſerve, that no man had ſeen more of ſcene ſhifting than himſelf, or better underſtood the machinery and patchwork of fortune. 'I have,' ſaid he, 'been 'tumbled all to pieces in a moment by a 'touch of the inconſtant ladies wand, 'and have been ſet to rights again in the 'twinkling of an eye, without knowing 'which way. I have been changed into 'the different ſhapes, of a pot boy, a 'prompter's lad, a ſailor, a marine, a keep'er of wild beaſts, a puppet ſhewman, 'and a candle ſnuffer. I have been com'fortably ſettled aſhore, toſſed about at 'ſea, and ſhut up in a priſon; and what 'carried me through all this, but Provi'dence and a little philoſophy---Lord I 'could turn my hand to any thing, and

'let

'let my ſtation be what it would, always 'found ſomething comfortable in it, and 'ſomething to be thankfull for---'Tis pride 'only that makes us feel the changes of 'fortune. Philoſophy, David uſed to ſay, 'is juſt like a little hedge, which, though 'it cannot cover a rich man, can always 'ſcreen a poor one from the tempeſt.' It will appear from theſe few obſervations of my friend David, that he poſſeſſed more enlarged ideas, than moſt people educated as he had been, who were without the means of acquiring inſtruction. Poor David had however a fault which he had practiſed for many years; it was the art of getting drunk, and had attained to ſuch perfection in the ſcience, that he was almoſt every night in that ſituation, which he would ſometimes very philoſophically maintain was neceſſary to exiſtence, as it ſet the fluids in motion and aſſiſted the animal ſpirits. Thus much at preſent for my

friend

friend David, who, when the lights and ſhades of character are faithfully delineated, will be more eſteemed than diſliked. He was ſincere, generous, honeſt, and faithful; on the other ſide, he was weak, unſuſpicious, and fond of uſing fine words, almoſt always ill pronounced and miſapplied.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Containing the illneſs and death of my mother, and the myſtery in which that event involves me.

I HAD hardly attained my ſeventeenth year when my mother fell ill, and gradually ſunk under a diſorder which by her phyſicians was pronounced a decline; fate could not, perhaps, have choſen a worſe moment to cut the thread of an exiſtence made doubly dear to me, from my having no other relation that I knew of in the world, beſides that the loſs of her abilities threatened the downfall of our little commonwealth. It was, however, fortunate for me (and it ought to ſhew us how Heaven ſometimes prepares us to receive the changes of ſituation,) that I had

I had from infancy felt a ſtrong diſlike to my occupation, not a little ſtrengthened by ſtories which I had read, that excited my curioſity and deſire to travel and ſeek my fortune in the metropolis; in ſhort, I had an inſurmountable inclination to know more of the world than ſcenic deſcription afforded me, I wiſhed to realize ſituation and to fall in with the common incidents and adventures of life; to this intent I formed a reſolution not to continue in the company at Burford, ſhould any thing happen to my mother.

My figure was about this time what might be called agreeable; I was about five feet ſix inches in height, ſlender made and my complexion healthy and florid; my hair was of a light brown and hung down from my ſhoulders, and my features were more expreſſive than handſome.

My

My manners, which had been formed from an excellent model of grace and good breeding, were gentle and obliging; my principal defects were, a ſort of diffidence, tacitunity, and melancholy, except at times when a flow of ſpirits took place, which in general was very great and of a very ſhort duration.

I was not, among other things, altogether inſenſible to the love of gallantry, already the girls of the village looked kind, and left their wheels to meet me, and already the good old mothers exclaimed as I paſſed along, that it was a great pity ſuch a young fellow, ſhould be a ſtrolling player.

Among the moſt early of my attachments was Molly Roſebuſh, a girl whoſe innocence and good-nature would have engaged any body to like her—accident introduced

introduced me to poor Molly; ſhe was going to market one day with her butter ſeated upon a tall mare, blind of one eye, and lame of the near leg; I had as uſual riſen early to take a walk and overtook her in the road, when the mare happened to ſtumble and threw her rider over her left ſhoulder; I was only in time to ſee the accident, and to inquire if Miſs Roſebuſh had received any injury: poor Molly bluſhed, and thanked me for my kindneſs, but aſſured me ſhe was not hurt at all; I however inſiſted on helping her up again on the back of the mare, who had ſtood ſtill all the time.

It may naturally be ſuppoſed that Miſs Molly Roſebuſh was very kind, after this miſadventure, in which ſhe had been much leſs reſerved than ſhe intended; but as I had ever conſidered the ſimple and artleſs, the moſt of any intitled to my protection,

I ſhould

I ſhould have taken no advantages that might have offered themſelves to me; I knew poor Molly was honeſt and had a good heart; in ſhort, I felt an eſteem for my neighbour that wanted only time and ſituation to bring it to perfection; fate, however, by a new diſpoſition of my affairs, put an end to the chapter of love I was about to ſtudy, and engaged my wiſhes and expectations into a different channel; the melancholy event we had ſo long looked for, now arrived, Mrs. Woodcock, who was performing a principal character, fainted away on the ſtage, and was carried to her room and put to bed, from which ſhe never roſe again; I flew to her the moment I was informed of her ſituation, but found her ſtrength almoſt exhauſted, for ſhe had concealed her real ſituation as long as poſſible to ſerve the intereſts of the manager; it was, however, out of the power of medicine to reſtore her

to

to health. I had hardly been five minutes in my mother's room before she called me to her bedside, and addressed me in the following very extraordinary and mysterious words: 'My dear child, do 'not grieve that I am about to leave this 'world, to me it is a moment of exultation, as I trust my faults are forgiven, for 'I have suffered more than is the common 'lot of human beings, yet I must not 'murmur. I leave you, my dear,' cried she, 'to the protection of a benevolent 'and all-powerful Being, whose goodness 'hath sustained me through all my difficulties, and whose mercy now seals my 'pardon for the past; whatever changes 'may happen to you, place your dependence upon him, nor vainly trust to your 'own endeavours or abilities, much less 'to the friendship of men; above all, beware of indiscretions that cannot be repaired, they poison our peace for ever,

'and

'and mingle bitterneſs in the ſweeteſt mo-
'ments of our lives. You are uninform-
'ed about your family; do not ſeek to
'know it; it will afford you no pleaſure:
'take, however, this ring, and when you
'ſometimes read the MOTTO, think of
'your mother; keep it conſtantly about
'you--chance, what do I ſay! an all direc-
'ting Providence, may one day, perhaps,
'inform you of a hiſtory that I have buried
'in a painful ſilence.'

David, at this moment entered the room with Mr. Climax, which was no ſooner perceived by my mother, than ſhe extend-ed her hand towards him. 'My good 'David,' cried ſhe, 'you have an honeſt, 'ſincere heart; to your friendſhip I leave 'my ſon.' She now repeated a ſhort prayer, when a ſhower of tears ſtopt her utterance, and ſhe fell lifeleſs on the pillow. 'She is 'dead!' cried David, whilſt in the agony

thoſe words occaſioned, I threw myſelf on the ground in the deepeſt ſorrow, which I thought would have rent my heart in pieces. Exceſs of grief muſt, however, ſoon want the power to be outrageous; weakneſs generally leads to tranquillity: a ſtill ſilence now followed, that added to the melancholy of the ſcene, and was kept up for a few moments, till it was interrupted by David's remarking, that almoſt her laſt words were directed to him; and I will never forget them, cried my faithful friend, while I have life or ſtrength left. Affection now lent us freſh tears, and fixed us immoveable to the ſpot, till the entreaties of Mrs. Climax made us quit the room.

I now retired to my apartment, where I had an opportunity to indulge that penſive ſorrow, that an abſtraction from worldly ideas ſometimes affords the mind,

which leads us to contemplate a heaven, and adore the goodneſs of the Creator. To the good there cannot be a greater conſolation for the loſs of a dear friend, than the conſideration, that they are removed from the evils and miſchiefs of this wretched world, and that their repentance will, as we are aſſured, entitle them to a better. To the bad, there is no reflection that can at theſe moments afford relief, but contrition for paſt errors, and a reſolution to amend the heart.

I now looked for the firſt time at the words of the Motto on my ring, they were as follows:

'Providence ſhall explain.'

The myſtery of theſe words not a little engaged my attention, and ſerved to awaken my curioſity; my mind took the impreſſion, and I felt diſpoſed to favour the

the improbabilities my imagination ſuggeſted, till, tired out with fatigue of body and ſpirits, I fell aſleep.

The next morning I found my mind ſomething more ſerene, and I aroſe with an intention of attending a rehearſal, which was called for a new piece that had been received with applauſe at the London theatre; this, however, Mr. Climax would not permit: ſcarcely any thing could equal the reſpect and affection with which that good man mentioned my mother's name; his friendſhip and intereſt were both engaged in the loſs.

The news of Mrs. Woodcock's death had no ſooner ſpread through the town, than it became the immediate ſubject of converſation from the nobleman's table to the farmer's: ſhe was regretted by all alike; ſo much reſpect had my mother's

humble virtues procured her, though in the ſituation of a ſtrolling player—Why is it, that the feelings of the great are ſo often behind, that they can only lament the merit which they might have raiſed?

My mother's burial was decent; ſhe was interred the church-yard at Swinbroke, where a little rough hewn ſtone ſtill remains, (raiſed at the expenſe of Mr. Climax) with the following inſcription, written by her own deſire:

TO THE MEMORY OF

MRS. ELIZABETH WOODCOCK,

Aged 38.

'She was known, only to her God.'

Mrs. Woodcock was followed to the grave by Mr. Climax, David, and myſelf, who were chief mourners, and ſeveral others

others who knew her when alive; and perhaps in this, a company of ſtrolling players paid more reſpect to the memory of a departed ſiſter, than the pride of exalted rank and ſituation would have done.

Though the occaſion was ſad, the tear of regret fell not from anguiſh, but ſilent ſorrow; it conſigned to the earth a woman ſafe in the mercy of the Creator.

The contempt of this world, and the exalted hopes of a better, was the conſequence of feeling for her loſs.

CHAP. IV.

The Diſſolution of our Company, and the Plans which are formed by David and myſelf, from the neceſſity to which we are reduced.

THE adverſe fates ſeemed to have fixed on the period of my mother's death, for the downfall of our houſe. Mr. Climax, a few months after that event, fell himſelf a victim to a dyſentery, that took him off the ſtage of life in a few days, and left open a ſituation once thought worth contending for: every one at this moment found himſelf poſſeſſed of abilities for the ſituation, and put in their reſpective claims; David was a candidate amongſt the reſt; he alledged, that he had had a regular education, and that he

he underſtood theatrical matters as well as any of them: he was, however, oppoſed very ſtrongly by Mr. Cowdell, who knew the company could not exiſt without his aſſiſtance. But the fates ſmiling at this little harmleſs controverſy, ended the buſineſs at once by deciding, that they ſhould not any of them arrive at the wiſhed-for honour. Thus do they often amuſe themſelves with the riſe and fall of empires; monarchies and republics of greater magnitude: Mr. Clement, as a tragic performer, was the ſupport of the theatre, was now called home by a father, who loved him ſufficiently to forgive the indiſcretions of youth; and Miſs Wilſon was married to a farmer's ſon in the town: in ſhort, had the diſſolution of this little commonwealth been planned or projected by the greateſt politicians in Europe, or even the great Catharine herſelf, it could not have been brought

about more completely, than by the death of my mother. The finiſhing ſtroke was, however, given by Mr. Gobble the magiſtrate, who refuſed to renew the licence. We were now called together by Mr. Cowdell, who, in a very florid and pathetic harangue, lamented the neceſſity we had to part. 'For myſelf,' ſaid he, after having enlarged on the decadence of our community, 'I have wrote to the ma-'nager of a neighbouring company to get 'an engagement; I would recommend you 'all to be equally diligent, and I wiſh you 'ſucceſs in your ſeveral undertakings.'--- Mr. Cowdell's advice was followed by all, except David and myſelf, who went together to our inn, to conſult what was beſt to be done, and retired to a back room for that purpoſe. My honeſt friend, David, ſeemed very little diſconcerted at the uncertainty of our ſituation; he called with his uſual good humour for ſome ale

and

and pipes, and then ſeating himſelf in an elbow chair, whiſtled an old Scotch tune till they were brought in. At laſt he broke ſilence, (preſſing the tobacco into the mouth of his pipe), 'Lord love ye, 'Mr. Woodcock, don't be ſo low ſpirited, 'come cheer up; the worſe luck now, 'the better another time; it is only the '*hippocondralics*, and if you give way, it 'is all over with ye. Only fix in your 'mind what you means to do, and where 'you means to go: for my part, I'll 'go to the *antipodums*, where the people 'have only one eye. North or South, 'Eaſt or Weſt, its all the ſame to me. I 'glories in being a philoſopher, and don't 'care a fig whether I live in a garret or 'a cellar: in my opinion, one's juſt as 'ſafe in a cockle-ſhell as in a ſeventy-'four, ſo as Providence does but keep 'the watch upon deck. Lord! its only 'being ſatisfied with one's lot; people

'are always ſaying they an't happy: why, 'how the D——l ſhould they, when 'nothing can pleaſe them. You ſee, Sir, 'cried David, pride is ſo *predomiant* in 'the human mind, that people are al-'ways longing and wiſhing for ſome-'thing or other: now, only give me a 'drop of good ale and half a pipe, and 'I am as merry as a cock-chafer; come 'then, ſince you and I are to commence 'pilgrims, let us ſet out jolly and in 'ſpirits.--what ſignifies being cut up!'

Such was the comfortable philoſophy my friend David made uſe of, to put me in temper with my ſituation; nor did I congratulate myſelf a little, on having a companion of ſo happy and contented a diſpoſition.

Various were the plans which were formed by David and myſelf, in conſe-

quence

quence of our being obliged to leave Burford: it was however decided, that we ſhould go to London, and as I was determined to forſake the profeſſion in which I had been educated, I propoſed advertiſing for a clerk's place, or ſome ſituation of that ſort, as I was fond of retirement, and could write a tolerable hand. David, on his part, reſolved to try to get into one of the London theatres, where he imagined his originality and humour might make him known to the town. It was further ſettled, that we ſhould loſe no time in our arrangements, as we had very little caſh in hand, ſo that we agreed to ſet out the next morning in the waggon, that being the cheapeſt conveyance. With this intent, we took leave of our friends at Burford, and amongſt the reſt I called on Molly Roſebuſh, who ſeemed a good deal affected, and wiſhed me ſucceſs with ſuch ſincerity, that almoſt brought the

tears into my eyes. So grateful is it to human nature to be beloved, whether in the way of friendſhip, or the more powerful paſſion. I haſtened home at night, not diſpoſed to ſleep, but to ruminate on the adventures I was likely to engage in a very few days, and fell aſleep on project and ſpeculation.

CHAP. V.

Containing our Journey to London, and the Adventure we met with on the road.

THE twilight had already began to yield to the influence of the riſing ſun, and the blackbird to whiſtle up the ſleepy cottagers, when I awoke, and went from my bed to the window to contemplate the beauties of the morning: the ſmell of the new graſs gave me freſh vigour and ſtrength: it was at this moment, that caſting my eye over the length of the meadow, the ſteeple of the pariſh church appeared juſt above the hill; it brought my mother to my recollection, and I ſhed another tear of gratitude and love; ſorrow deſtitute of reproach has no

ſting. I now addreſſed myſelf with hope and adoration to the Almighty Being, on whoſe goodneſs I had only to depend: I muſt confeſs, that the tears run plentifully at this moment---a ſtranger to all the world, without a relation, and almoſt without a friend, and nearly deſtitute of money, had not much happineſs to look to---yet my heart, loaded as it was at firſt, with anguiſh and deſpair, felt lightened, and even joyful after my prayer to the Deity. I felt the protection that I had aſked, and had an angel appeared to guide my footſteps, I could hardly have been more convinced and aſſured, nor has that dependence ever left me through all all the viciſſitudes of life: would that I could engage many in the world to make the ſame trial, who are not ſenſible how much of peace and happineſs they might obtain by ſuch reliance.

It was now time that we ſhould ſet out on our journey, to be with the waggon at ſix o'clock, the hour appointed. When I went to David's room with a heart more cheerful and gay than I had experienced ſince my mother's death, to call him, as I could eaſily imagine he was not yet ſtirring: he was, as I expected, in the arms of Somnus, who had guarded him very cloſely all night. I knocked ſeveral times at the door, but was only anſwered by the reſponſive muſic of his noſe, which, though it might not have the beauties of modulation or cadence to recommend it, was as perfectly in time. It was with a great deal of difficulty after I got into his room by forcing the latch which he had tied inſide, that I awakened my companion; a few tweaks of the ear ſenſibly applied, had however that effect, and he ſat upright all at once in his bed, exclaiming, 'Where's

'Where's the bottle of poiſon for Mr. 'Beverly?'---'Come, come, David,' cried I, 'it is time to get up; don't be talk-'ing of your properties juſt now, our act-'ing is at an end, man; ſee what a fine 'morning it is.'---'A fine morning!' returned David, 'why the lights are down 'yet, the ſtage is darken'd, I'm ſure,' rubbing his eyes. It was ſome time before I could perſuade David it was time to go, nor did I when that point was effected, ever behold ſuch a mixture of alertneſs and ſtupidity; he jumped out of his bed in a moment, and ſeized hold on his ſmall cloaths, when miſtaking the left ſide for the right, he thruſt in his leg, and feeling a ſudden check from the awkwardneſs of the poſition, fell all on one ſide to the ground, his elbow coming in contact with a ———, that added not a little to the diſtreſsfulneſs of his ſituation. Owing to this accident, however, the ſo-

porific

porific particles that had been all night mixed in the fluids of my friend Dobbin's animal ſyſtem were diſperſed, and he was ſufficiently ſenſible to ſ--r moſt heartily at the miſadventure he had met with on getting out of bed.

Having ſettled our lodging the preceding night, we were not long in making our arrangements; David had only to pack up a few things in a knapſack for convenience, and I had every thing elſe ready. We had no ſooner ſhut the latch of the public-houſe door after us, than my heart, which was never an inſenſible one, began to beat and feel new pain at the idea of leaving my native village. In our way to the waggon, we paſſed the barn in which we had ſo often played; David made a dead point at the ſpot, exclaiming in a doleful voice, 'There's the barn!' looking at it with a

won-

wonderful deal of ſagacity---it was the firſt ſentence he had ſpoke for about half a mile; I looked alſo at the place, and the ray of viſion fell from thence to the ground: the ſcene was affecting; I was glad to get rid of the impreſſion, and haſtened towards the London road, frequently turning about to take a parting look: David, with a rueful countenance, dragged on his ſteps behind as diſconſolate as myſelf.

We had now overtaken the waggon, when I aſcended the ladder and took my place in front next a handſome young woman, very genteelly dreſt, with a countenance that ſeemed to bid me welcome; David followed, and ſtowed himſelf away among ſome ſtraw. I was a good deal ſtruck at the appearance of my fellow-traveller; ſhe was rather a delicate made girl, and appeared about one and twenty;

her

her dreſs, which was a ſtriped cotton, fitted her with ſuch exactneſs, and was ſo neat and plain, that it gave me a very favourable idea of the taſte and judgment of the wearer; while her face expreſſed a ſweetneſs and complacency that engaged me to converſation: between two perſons in whoſe minds the ſocial principle is pure and natural, it is not difficult to get acquainted with each other: reſerve is the reſult of either pride or ſuſpicion, and I could not perceive a trait of either one or the other in the countenance of my fair companion.

Some natural obſervations and inquiries made the way to converſation, ſuch as the fineneſs of the weather—the ſubject of our journey—-and other little trifles, which ſerved to inform me more and more every moment, of the good ſenſe and education of the ſtranger. 'I

'conſider

'conſider myſelf,' cried I, after having dwelt for an inſtant on the charms I had diſcovered in her face, much obliged to incident this morning; 'Why ſo?' returned my fellow-traveller, 'it has introduced me,' ſaid I, 'to a young lady I 'cannot help wiſhing to be better acquainted with, and all that aſtoniſhes 'me, is, that accident ſhould have put 'her into a waggon.'—'Indeed, Sir,' replied Miſs Atkins, for that was her name, 'it was inclination and œconomy 'together, that made me travel in this 'way; I have no pride to be uneaſy for 'a better accommodation, and the narrowneſs of my circumſtances will not 'permit me to be extravagant; beſides, you ſee how much I am recompenſed for my prudence; if I had gone 'in the coach, I ſhould not have had the 'pleaſure of your company.'—'And are 'you not afraid,' ſaid I, 'to make ſo

'ready

'ready an acquaintance with a young 'man who is entirely a ſtranger to you?' —'Not at all,' returned Miſs Atkins; 'I 'am ſure you would find more pleaſure in 'protecting, than in inſulting a helpleſs 'woman; and to that, I truſt. There is an 'expreſſion in your looks, that convinces 'me you love the ſex: but there is a 'gentleneſs in your manner, that informs 'me, at the ſame time, that a good heart 'directs the paſſion: it is not from ſuch 'men as you, that we are in danger; po-'liteneſs may be the effect of diſſimula-'tion; but the politeneſs of the heart, if 'I may uſe that expreſſion, is eaſily ſeen. 'We may perceive in the eyes a wiſh to 'ſerve, and a deſire to pleaſe us, while 'the beſt managed addreſs that has not 'ſo pure a ſource, is ever to be miſtruſt-'ed. I ſhould not have felt diſpoſed to 'have ſaid a word, had I not entertained 'a good opinion of you the firſt moment

'I ſaw

'I ſaw you; indeed, I am ſure, my conjec-
'tures are right, that you are of a good
'family, and have received the advanta-
'ges of education.'—'Indeed,' returned
I, 'you are miſtaken; ſo far from being
'of what is a called a good family, I am
'not even informed of my father's ſitua-
'tion in life;—but I conclude it was a
'very humble one; for my mother, tho'
'ſhe often ſpoke of him with tenderneſs,
'never made me acquainted with that
'part of her hiſtory which preceded my
'my birth; as for my education, it has
'been merely ſuperficial.'---'It will not
'be eaſy,' cried Miſs Atkins, 'for you to
'perſuade me, that it has been neglect-
'ed; but if it had, it only reflects the
'more honour to yourſelf, ſince you
'muſt have poſſeſſed an underſtanding
'that ſtood in very little need of culti-
'vation.'

Such

Such was the converſation, which in part diſcovered to me the character and ſentiments of my companion; few, I believe, in my ſituation, would have felt but as I did at the time, my heart free from any other real impreſſion could not reſiſt a kind of attachment ſympathy produced, and which I did not heſitate to communicate, but in this, I was diſappointed; 'You muſt not,' cried Miſs Atkins, 'ſpeak 'of love to me, however agreeable you 'may be as my friend, you muſt any further 'be unſucceſsful, for my heart is pre-en-'gaged.' Unpleaſant as this explanation might be at the moment, I could not help feeling a great deal of pleaſure, when my amiable companion ſaid, 'Come, Mr. 'Woodcock, I will make you an offer, if 'you think it worth any thing; you ſhall 'have my moſt ſincere friendſhip, and all 'the love it will admit with propriety, 'and I will have yours in exchange; then

'if

'if I am diſtreſt you may aſſiſt your poor 'ſiſter, and if you are unfortunate, I will 'conſole you as much as I can.' I was juſt about ſealing this innocent treaty of alliance, on my fellow traveller's lips, when the waggon drew up to an inn door, where we alighted to get ſome refreſhment. It was the ſign of the Red Lyon, at Whitney, which had been no ſooner announced by the waggoner, than David, who had enjoyed a comfortable overtaker of ſleep, deſcended the ladder after us, and giving himſelf a ſhake, entered the kitchen, which was almoſt filled with young country farmers and joſkins, who were ſtanding round a little fat man, dreſt in a ſcarlet coat, gold fringed waiſtcoat, and a ruffled ſhirt. It was highly pleaſant to obſerve the countenances of his auditors, every one upon the broad grin, and filled with expectation and delight. I preſently found that the gentleman

man in the ruffled ſhirt, was a conjuror and an Iſraelite, as he held a pack of cards in his hand, which he ſhuffled with adroitneſs, and boaſted not a little of the perfection to which he had brought the art of legerdemain, in the true Moſaic dialect.

I confeſs, ſome of the tricks this ingenious gentleman diſplayed, gave me a moment's aſtoniſhment; but I had much greater reaſon to admire the diſſimulation and addreſs he made uſe of, to take in the bumpkins about him. Among others, were the following deceptions which he practiſed on the ſtanders by: after fixing his eyes upon a young waggoner, whoſe team had drawn up with our's, he preſented him the cards, deſiring him to chuſe one; 'Ee's, I wull,' returned the joſkin, with his mouth half open, 'what's you ſhay, do you know 'the card?' cried the Jew, holding the

pack between his finger and thumb, 'Ee's, I does,' replied the waggoner, 'I'ſh that it then?' after he had given them a ſhuffle, 'Noa!' cried the countryman. The conjuror now pretended to pronounce ſome myſtical words to promote his ſucceſs, and then preſſing his nail againſt the pack, the ſix of diamonds, the card the waggoner had choſen, to the great aſtoniſhment of all preſent, fell on the ground: 'Certainly, that muſht be 'the cardſh,' cried the Iſraelite with exultation, 'Zure enough it is! the ſux of 'diamonds, zure enough,' exclaimed the poor countryman; 'why how the dickins 'does he do it? Lord, its vaſtly funny!' The attention of the ſpectators was now taken off by the conjuror calling out to an old woman, who was going by the door with ſome bruſhwood, for her to come in. It is not eaſy to deſcribe the aukward aſtoniſhment of Goody George,

for

for that was the name the countryman called her, when ſhe found herſelf introduced to this extraordinary gentleman, who ſhe miſtook for a lord, or a parliament man at leaſt. She curtſied about a dozen different times, and ſtood at a vaſt diſtance, till the maſter of legerdemain told her to come nearer: 'Come here, 'my good womans,' cried he, 'what'ſh 'your name, what's you call yourſhelf?' 'I am a poor woman, an pleaſe your 'honour,' returned ſhe. 'Your trade, 'your buſhneſs, my dearſh?' 'I pick wool,' and pleaſe your honour; 'well, my good 'womanſh, you ſeem very poor, there's a 'guinea for you.' Great, indeed, was the aſtoniſhment of the clowns, when they, as they thought, beheld the conjuror put a golden guinea, for ſo they called it, into the old woman's hand. 'Go 'homeſh,' cried the Iſraelite, 'and get 'yourſhelf a bit of ſome things for dinners.'

Goody George had now, after a hundred curtſeys, got to the door of the inn on her way home, when ſhe ſtopt to take a look at her riches: when lo, unclenching her fiſt, ſhe found it empty!---Surprize fixed her for a few minutes to the ſpot, when ſhe began mumbling to herſelf in a jargon as unintelligible as the conjuror's, to the infinite amuſement of thoſe who had begun to ſmoke the trick; no one was able to keep his countenance except the Iſraelite, who ſaid very coolly, 'What's, good womans, have you loſt 'your moneys? God bleſh me, how 'could you do ſo?' Mother George, on her ſide proteſted, ſhe had never opened her hand at all, and aſſerted, 'that it 'muſt have been the tempter Satan, who 'had got it from her.' This ſuppoſition was not a little increaſed by my telling her aſide, the character of his *honor*, which made her ſtare with amazement.

Poor

Poor Goody George had, by this time, ſo much awakened the ſpirit of fun in the joſkins around, that they had begun to play her ſeveral ugly tricks, ſuch as pinching her behind, which application was kept up at all points whenever ſhe turned about to complain of the injury, treading upon her toes, ſtealing her wood, &c. when, at laſt, enraged at the treatment ſhe had met with, ſhe flew like a tigreſs on the poor Jew, who having retreated prudently a few ſteps behind, ſhe ſtumbled over the waggoner's whip, that had been placed in her way on purpoſe, to the great diverſion of all preſent. I happened to be the only one who ſeemed in the leaſt inclined to aſſiſt her, which I did at the riſque of being laughed at, and ſaw her ſafe to the door again, putting a ſhilling in her hand to ſoften the wrong ſhe had ſuffered: Her exit was not, however, made, without many bleſſings on

my head, and innumerable curſes on the poor conjuror.

Order was no ſooner reſtored, than the Iſraelite continued his exhibition. David had now, by ſome means, introduced his riſible phiz between the ſhoulders of a couple of tall waggoners, and was all attention to the buſineſs, highly delighted at his ſituation: the artleſs, and yet oddly contraſted cunning of his face, was not long in engaging the obſervation of the conjuror, who ſhewed him the cards ſpread out in his hands, bidding David fix on any one he pleaſed in his own mind, when, after a little affectation of ſcience, he produced the very card. Poor David was ſo overcome at this maſter-piece, that he ſtood full three minutes gaping in the conjuror's face, and rubbing his hands with pleaſure and aſtoniſhment. 'Now 'I will ſhow you a muſh better trick

'than

'than that iſh,' cried the Iſraelite; 'I 'will lay you one ſhilling, that you don't 'ſay my moniſh to three queſtions I ſhall 'aſhk of you.' David's eyes gliſtened at this propoſal; and I could perceive by his looks, that he was bent upon outdoing the maſter of ſcience---and with that intent, inſiſted upon certain reſtrictions and regulations, ſuch as, that he ſhould not be hurt or moleſted, or interrupted in any way, all of which were immediately agreed to; and the money 'a 'ſplendid ſhilling,' put into the hands of the landlord, a tall large boned man with hard features, and whoſe muſcles had hardly been moved during the whole entertainment, which he ſeemed only deſirous of promoting, as it brought in cuſtomers to his houſe.---'Well, what'ſh 'ſay you,' cried the conjuror at laſt, to my friend David, 'are you quite ready?' The anſwer was 'yes;' with an air of

conſcious ſuperiority. 'Well then, let 'me ſee whats ſhall I ſay; maybeſh you 'are going your wayſh to Londons to-'day?' 'My money,' returned David with exultation—'to make your fortunes, 'iſhn't that it my good friendſh?'—My 'money,' repeated David, inſuring himſelf the victory, as he had only one more more queſtion to anſwer:—'And whats 'will you give me before you goeſh, ha, 'my good friendſh,' continued the conjuror with a ſneer; 'My mo—mo—mo-'ney, articulated poor David,' trying to recover the words as they fell from his lips, turning at the ſame time as pale as aſhes, and trembling from head to foot. Poor Dobbins continued ſome minutes in this ſituation, without uttering a ſyllable, till he was awakened by the tall waggoner next him, who let him further into the ſecret, that he had actually loſt his money. This news was received

received with the moſt horrible contortions in the face of the loſer, not to be equalled by even thoſe produced by a fit of the gout, or the pains of the cholic. It was in vain, that my friend David inſiſted he had been treated unfairly; it was in vain he appealed to the feelings of the ſpectators, who ſeemed more inclined to laugh than to take his part. I began already to perceive the ſtorm that was brewing; every muſcle in my friend David's face and body began now to ſhow an inclination to action, and were not long in collecting their powers together; for no ſooner was he convinced that expoſtulation was uſeleſs, than he ruſhed upon the poor conjuror, throwing his whole ſtrength into the attack:--- Gladly would the wretched Iſraelite have eſcaped out of the window, which he was near effecting, had it not been for the tall waggoner, who unfortunately

ſtopped his progreſs by treading upon his toes---which accident occaſioned him to fall back into the advance of the enemy, who ſeized hold of his fringed waiſtcoat like a bull-dog, till a large remnant of it gave way, to the diverſion of all preſent. David now grappled the miſerable conjuror by the throat, till he found the ſhilling he had juſt before received, and then gave him a kicking for his complacency.

So fickle is fortune, that no one ſeemed now at all inclined to take the poor conjuror's ſide; the proweſs and ſucceſs of my companion had, in a few minutes, transferred all the ridicule and diſgrace on the poor unhappy Jew, who was now, in his turn, the object of laughter and contempt---and to add to his diſtreſsful ſituation, was buffeted from one joſkin to to another with infinite dexterity.

Miſs

Miſs Atkins was not leſs entertained than myſelf, at the adventures we had met with at the inn; which place we were now obliged to leave, as the waggoner informed us, it was high time we ſhould proceed on our way to London.

CHAP. VI.

Continuation of our Journey;---a ſomewhat philoſophical Converſation on Contentment, with the Hiſtory of Miſs Atkins.

MY friend David had no ſooner ſeated himſelf in the waggon, than he began a ſort of inward grumbling, which very much reſembled the lower notes of a baſſoon, but was nothing more than the reſiduum of the curſes he had ſo liberally beſtowed upon the poor conjuror. 'D——d raſcal,' cried David, in a ſort of ſide ſpeech, 'it's a pity but ſuch 'vagabonds were put in the cage for the 'good of the community; Ecod, I've 'almoſt throttled him, however, he won't 'be able to eat his ſupper.' I could not help

help at this moment indulging a vein of pleaſantry at my fellow-traveller's expenſe, by telling him, that he had certainly been very wrong in ill-uſing the poor Jew, who, I obſerved, had very fairly won the money. It had the deſired effect; David grinned moſt horribly, and ſwore he had a great mind to get out of the waggon and beat him again: 'An ill-looking thief, with his 'fring'd waiſcot, indeed; why, zounds! 'I muſt have loſt my money, let me 'have ſaid what I would.' 'Well, never 'mind David,' anſwered I, 'it will learn 'you to be more cautious in future; we 'are often moſt in danger when we fancy 'ourſelves moſt ſecure---honeſty is no 'match for practiſed cunning and deception.'---'Any perſon,' interrupted Miſs Atkins, 'might have been ſerved in the 'ſame way.' David's eyes gliſtened at theſe words, and good humour flu̇ſhed in his

his face once more; he was ſatisfied at the excuſe made to his vanity, and favoured her with a gracious ſmile; and to add to the compliment, thruſt his hand with vaſt haſte into his knapſack, and pulled out a large piece of bread and cheeſe, and a leathern bottle filled with brandy: 'You ſee, Miſs,' cried he, 'I have taken care of the main 'chance; come, Miſs, take a drop, its 'vaſtly good, I aſſure ye. I have a great 'reſpect for this leather-piſtol of mine; 'I aſſure you, it has been my compa-'nion through all my *vicitudes*, and was 'always my counſellor when I was *dubu-'rous*, what I ſhould do---for after I ap-'plied to it, I was always ſure to have 'ſome bright thought or other; to 'me it is law, phyſic, and divinity.'--- Miſs Atkins, who was too good-natured to reject my friend David's offer entirely, accepted ſome of the bread and cheeſe,

cheeſe, but refuſed to drink any of the liquor, which diſtreſſed him exceedingly. 'I can't think,' cried he, 'how any body 'can diſlike brandy:' at laſt, however, he handed it to me, winking with a look of vaſt ſagacity, which I returned with a frown. There is nothing more unpleaſant to the feelings, than to ſee a delicate mind oppreſſed by a falſe concluſion---I had obſerved my fair companion had imagined what he meant, and bluſhed at the idea.---I am ſure, if I could have had an opportunity of telling David what he had done, and the pain he had occaſioned in our fellow-traveller's mind, he would have been very ſorry for it: his humanity was frequently called forth on the ſlighteſt occaſions; nor did the roughneſs of his diſpoſition ever prevent him from feeling for another---A ſtranger to the refinements of reaſoning and method, he ſeldom waited for his judgment to approve

prove the impulſes of generoſity or friendſhip.

Miſs Atkins had, however, too much goodneſs of heart, to let her be more than a moment chagrined; and to aſſure us of her forgiveneſs, ſhe opened, in her turn, a little baſket that contained ſome cold fowl and ham, which ſhe added to our little ſtock of proviſions, inviting us both very heartily to partake of it.--- Never did I eat a ſweeter repaſt; and never were people more happy together, ---nor was the poor waggoner neglected, who ſhared pretty largely of David's bread and cheeſe. The ſcene around us was delightful; a refreſhing ſhower of rain had increaſed the verdure of the fields, whilſt a beautiful rainbow extended its arch from the Eaſtern horizon to the Weſt: all was ſtill on every ſide, except the bleating of the ſheep and the lowing of

of the cattle.—'How charming,' cried Miſs Atkins, 'is this picture; do you 'not feel a pleaſure Mr. Woodcock, in 'being away from the noiſe and buſineſs 'of the world?---How much ſuperior to 'the hurry and diſſipation of the town, 'is the calm retreat, where nature ſpreads 'all her charms to engage the mind to 'happineſs, while peace adds her bleſſing 'to the abundant ſtore.'---'Why you 'have add'd to the ſtore, to be ſure, 'Miſs,' cried David, (who had only caught the two laſt words), 'and I never 'eat a nicer leg of a fowl in my life, odd 'rabbit it! I knew Providence would 'take care of us; I never was hungry in 'my life, but ſhe came in pat with 'ſomething or other; to be ſure, ſhe 'has marketted to-day better than ſhe 'uſually does---it's a very nice bit of 'fowl, that it is, to be ſure.' It was ſome time, (owing to my friend David's inter-

interruption), before I could renew the ſubject Miſs Atkins had ſo poetically entered upon, and which I only effected, by giving him a drop more of the brandy, which occaſioned a ſilence of at leaſt half a minute, while it was at his mouth. 'I think, Miſs,' ſaid I, 'with you, that 'that a country life is, above all others, 'the moſt likely to afford happineſs--- 'the mind, in being abſtracted from the 'world, not only loſes ſight of its follies 'and vanities, but is preſerved from the 'anxiety annexed to buſineſs; yet, not-'withſtanding the preference I have for 'a country life, circumſtances oblige me 'to ſeek an employment in the metropo-'lis, and though I am ſure the town will 'afford me but few rational pleaſures, 'ſince it is my lot, I muſt ſubmit to it.' 'What do you talk of that for, Sir,' interrupted David, 'don't be caſt down 'about it----what matters it, whether

'one's

'one's in the town, or in the country; 'in a caſtle, or in a cottage, or in a 'coach and ſix, or in a waggon, ſo as 'one's got ſomething to eat and drink.--- 'Lord! being contented, is all the mat- 'ter: what ſignifies a nice warm down bed 'unleſs you can lay down in peace upon 'it---hey, Miſs: now I always ſleeps 'like a top, as ſoon as I turns in; to be 'ſure, I never injured nobody as I 'knows of, except an old woman that 'ſold me ſome gingerbread when I was 'a boy, and gave me two-pence too 'much change, which I codn't find in 'my heart to return her.—Do to ano- 'ther as you would be done by, that's 'the way to be happy; how can a bad 'man have any peace of mind? If he 'gets rich, it's all nothing---and if he is 'poor, he's as wretched as a mad dog, 'and may be ſome fatal *cataſtrope* or 'other, puts an end to his life, for it's 'nothing

'nothing in the world but pride---now a 'man that's proud never can be happy: 'nobody wiſhes him well, for real friend-'ſhip never comes near a proud man; 'he ſtands all alone, and when once he 'begins to totter, down he comes, for 'no perſon will help him up. Good-'nature's a great bleſſing----Lord! it 'makes every thing ſo ſweet and plea-'ſant, I wonder people don't like to have 'it about them oftener, it makes them 'ſo much beloved and reſpected; then it 'rubs off all our difficulties, and makes 'the heart as light as a roaſted apple. 'Doesn't it, Miſs?' 'Indeed, it does,' returned Miſs Atkins, 'and I pity very 'much the poor wretch who wants it.' I could perceive by the lively expreſſion pictured in Miſs Atkins's face, that ſhe formed a much higher opinion of my friend David, than ſhe entertained at our ſetting out, ſo that we paſſed away the time

time as ſociably as could be wiſhed.---The day had now pretty near cloſed in, when we arrived at Oxford, where we ſtop't above an hour, drank ſome good ale, and replaced ourſelves in the waggon. Notwithſtanding it was pretty late, Miſs Atkins ſeemed determined to keep herſelf awake; and at our requeſt, favoured us with a ſong, which ſhe warbled moſt ſweetly. The words were as follows, of which ſhe told us ſhe was herſelf the authoreſs---the ſubject, a lady placing a falling roſe in her boſom.

I.

Rude the wind, unkind the ſhower,
That made thee droop thy head;
That bent ſo low ſo fair a flower,
The pride of all the bed.

II.

Let me preſerve thee, beauteous roſe,
Where no cold froſt appears;
Where thou ſhalt feel no wind that blows,
No ſhower----but my tears.

Miſs Atkins had no ſooner finiſhed her ſong, than David, (who had expreſſed his approbation by ah's! and oh's! which ill-timed ejaculations generally followed a cadence or a ſhake), broke out into the moſt extravagant praiſe of her voice and ſtile, and declared he could, by his intereſt, procure her an engagement at any of the country theatres, if not at Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden. Miſs Atkins, however, declined this offer---alledging, that ſhe diſliked a public life very much, even if ſhe thought herſelf capable of the ſituation.

I was now ſo ſenſible of my fair traveller's being exhauſted with fatigue, that I requeſted ſhe would lay down to ſleep; and, at the ſame time, aſſured her of the reſpect and eſteem I already had for her, which, however aukward her ſituation might be, would not permit me to of-

fend

ſend her, even in thought. Miſs Atkins, with great good-nature replied, that ſhe was convinced of her ſafety---and to ſhew me, that ſhe could rely upon my words, ſhe would take a little reſt; this was no ſooner determined on, than I made her as ſoft a place in the ſtraw near the middle of the waggon as I could, to which, after wiſhing us good night ſhe retired, leaving David and myſelf together. As I was not immediately diſpoſed to ſleep, I could not help indulging ſome unpleaſant anticipations of the life I was about to lead, which, though they might not be real, my fears were too much warranted by what I had heard and read, to be diſregarded; I felt uneaſy at the changes and diſappointments I might expect; and at the liberty of conſcience that would be neceſſary for me to ſucceed in a town, where cunning and extortion are the ſureſt ways to live. In

theſe reflections, I was, however, diſturbed by David, who had been ſome time making his remarks on Miſs Atkins---ſuch as, 'Egad, ſhe's a deviliſh fine 'girl---if I was a young fellow, I know 'what I know---I wonder whether ſhe's 'aſleep---that was a nice fowl---What 'do you think ſhe is? a lady's maid, I 'dare ſay.' All of which I paid no manner of attention to, till at laſt the pauſes became ſo long between every ſentence, that I concluded, he muſt be aſleep in a few minutes, which proved to be the caſe.

During the interval of ſilence in which I was left, I was led into reflections on the ſuperior pleaſure of having the confidence and eſteem of a generous girl, who had placed herſelf under my protection; above that, of being the ſeducer of virtue and honour, who, while he gra-

gratifies a momentary inclination, deſtroys the peace and character of an amiable woman. If I can always, thought I, preſerve theſe ideas, I cannot fail of being happy, though I ſhould have but a ſtiver in the world; and why ſhould I not preſerve them? Let the ſhafts of folly and extravagance fly where they may, they ſhall never fall on innocence: with theſe reflections, and with thankful gratitude for the peaceful enjoyment of the day, I fell into a ſweet ſleep, from which I did not awake until the ſun had riſen the next morning, when we ſtopt at a village near Henley, and had ſome breakfaſt. After we were ſeated again in the waggon, Miſs Atkins, who had made me the promiſe the preceding night, favoured me with her own little hiſtory, on condition that I ſhould afterwards relate mine. 'I was born' ſaid ſhe, 'in 'London, and educated under the care

'of my mother, who was left a widow,
'with a very ſmall income; her conſtant
'leſſons to me when young, were, to place
'my hopes and expectations on the Al-
'mighty, and my own induſtry, and to
'entertain no proud or vain ideas, which
'would be dangerous to my own peace,
'and ruinous to my ſituation.——My
'mother, to aſſiſt her circumſtances, let
'ready-furniſhed lodgings, which were
'generally taken by ſingle gentlemen;
'and about four years ago, were occu-
'pied by an Iriſh officer of the name of
'Fitzpatrick, with whom I was a very
'great favourite, as I could perceive by
'the manner with which he behaved to
'me----but I was too ſenſible of his
'being a rake, to attend in the leaſt to
'what he ſaid, and always ſhunned him
'as much as poſſible. One evening,
'however, my mother was perſuaded to
'go out to drink tea with a friend, and

'as

'as the captain was not expected in till 'late, ſhe thought ſhe ſhould be home 'ſome time before him: in this, how-'ever, we were diſappointed; he re-'turned earlier than uſual, and in li-'quor. Finding I was alone, he entered 'into converſation with me, and pro-'ceeded to take ſome liberties which I 'thought improper, and in which he 'was only prevented by a ſhower of tears 'which came to my relief: I ſhall never 'forget the aſtoniſhment of the generous 'Hibernian, when he ſaw my diſtreſs--- 'He came to himſelf in a moment, and 'took my hand and kiſſed it in a man-'ner, ſo different from what he had uſed 'before, that I could not help forgiving 'him, and promiſed that all ſhould paſs 'over in ſilence. About the ſame time 'this little accident happened, my mother 'had given caſh for a note to aſſiſt a 'friend, which, when it became due,

'not paid; and as ſhe had herſelf paid
'it away, an act was commenced
'againſt them both for the money, and
'as her acquaintance amuſed her with
'pretences that ſhe would ſettle it, it
'went on without my mother giving her-
'ſelf any further trouble about it, till an
'execution was put into our houſe. You
'may eaſily judge, Mr. Woodcock, of
'our ſituation;---we had never in our
'lives been ſued, even for the ſmalleſt
'ſum, and our apprehenſions were the
'moſt dreadful that could be imagined.
'When Captain Fitzpatrick came home,
'my mother was obliged to tell him
'what had happened to us, as a man
'was put in poſſeſſion: when, as I ex-
'pected, he immediately inſiſted on pay-
'ing the money, which I could not pre-
'vent, though I did not like the idea of
'being under obligations to a man, who
'had certainly once behaved ill.' The next
morning

morning after he went out, his ſervant brought down a letter for me---the contents were as follows, as near as I can recollect :---

'My dear young Lady,

'I brought the tears from your eyes 'once, from rudeneſs and violence, 'and I have never forgiven myſelf 'ſince---it was unlike a ſoldier and a 'gentleman; incloſed is a ſmall preſent--- 'if you refuſe to take it, you will do me 'great injuſtice, as I declare to Heaven 'I have no motive, but to make you and 'your mother happy.

'May God bleſs you both,

'Your ſincere friend,

'LEWIS FITZPATRICK.'

'In the inſide was a twenty-pound note. 'I immediately acquainted my mother 'with this extraordinary inſtance of ge- 'neroſity; we could neither of us help 'ſhedding tears, when we conſidered the 'goodneſs of heart, that muſt have di- 'rected ſo noble an atonement---For my 'own part, had it not been contrary to 'my education to place my hopes too 'high, I could almoſt have loved him--- 'but he was the brother of a nobleman, 'and a man of fortune. I was, how- 'ever, ſoon after this relieved from all 'pain on the ſubject, for I anſwered his 'letter in as polite and grateful terms as 'I could, aſſuring him, That I had 'long ſince forgot all that had paſſed--- 'this led to a converſation, wherein he 'called me his ſiſter, and profeſſed the 'moſt diſintereſted friendſhip for me. 'Indeed, I was now too well convinced 'of his goodneſs, not to eſteem and ad-

'mire

'mire his character. Every day pro-
'duced ſome new inſtance of genero-
'ſity, till he was ordered abroad to join
'his regiment—But his deſire to ſerve
'us did not end with his abſence; for
'he recommended me in ſuch ſtrong
'terms to a lady of faſhion, a diſtant re-
'lation of his, who reſided at Rich-
'mond, that ſhe took me into her houſe
'as her own maid, a ſituation I very
'much wiſhed for, as it was ſuited to my
'abilities and inclination.

'I paſſed my time very agreeably with
'Lady Antrim, from whom I received
'many favours: my mother's death,
'however, determined me to make uſe
'of what little money I had, having a
'younger ſiſter left unprotected, only
'eleven years old. To this intent, I left
'my place, and took a little ſhop
'at Peterſham, where I ſet up in the

'millinery line; but my little ſpecula-
'tion turned out to be badly formed—
'for though I was aſſiſted by Lady An-
'trim, and ſome other perſons of faſhion
'in the neighbourhood, I found I was
'living upon my ſtock and principal.—
'To add to my diſtreſs, I heard about
'this time of the death of Captain Fitz-
'patrick, which occurrence ſeemed to
'damp, in ſome degree, the friendſhip
'Lady Antrim had expreſſed for me,
'who was one of thoſe perſons of rank,
'who do more from recommendation and
'politeneſs, than from feeling: I did
'not, therefore, venture to aſk any fur-
'ther aſſiſtance from her—Providence,
'however, ſupplies our neceſſities from
'where we leaſt expect. I had, during
'the little time I had been at Peterſham,
'formed a friendſhip with a miller's fa-
'mily, who lived within two or three
'doors of me. It was natural for me to

'men-

'mention my little difficulties and loſſes
'in trade to theſe good people, without
'any deſign. One day, however, Mr.
'Howell, (for that was the miller's name)
'put a folded bit of paper into my
'hands, which he preſſed between his
'own, and told me not to look at it till
'I got into the ſhop, when I found it
'was a Bank note—I immediately went
'back with it to tell him what it was, but
'that good man inſiſted upon my taking
'it.'---"Neighbours," he ſaid, "ought
"to aſſiſt one another—I have enough,
"God bleſs you with it, for I know you
"want it."---'This little timely ſupply I
'received removed my embarraſſments,
'which were in proportion to my ſitua-
'tion, ſo far, that I went on very com-
'fortably: I found, however, that I did
'not only poſſeſs the friendſhip of the
'father, for young Howell began now to
'pay me many attentions, which at firſt
'I diſcouraged, as I knew them to be

'people of property, though my heart 'declared for the miller; but our eſteem 'for each other was, notwithſtanding my 'caution, diſcovered by the old gentle-'man, to whom I candidly confeſſed my 'reaſons, for the reſerve I had ſhewn his 'ſon.'—"I am ſure Polly," ſaid he, "my ſon likes you, and I think you are "a good girl; I never yet ſet my heart "upon money, except to get enough to "keep my family comfortably. I don't "like your fine ladies with little for-"tunes, who ſpend more than they "bring. You'll make him a good wife; "beſides, I love you ſo well, that I ſhall "leave you a legacy whether you marry "him or no, ſo you may as well ſet-"tle the buſineſs between you."—'After 'this, it was impoſſible for me to reject 'the advances of young Howell, who was 'lively, bold, and generous; the eſteem 'we felt for each other has increaſed ever 'ſince;

'ſince; and our marriage is intended to 'take place ſoon after my return to Pe-'terſham. The occaſion of my taking 'this journey was to ſecure ſome little 'effects left me by a relation of my 'mother's who lived at Swinbrooke.— 'You will moſt likely ſee young Howell 'very ſhortly, as he is to meet me at the 'inn; and I am ſure, when I repre-'ſent to him your goodneſs and attention 'to me, he will be very proud of your 'friendſhip.' Such was the little narrative Miſs Atkins told us, to paſs away the time on our journey.

CHAP. VII.

A ſketch of my friend David's life.---Our arrival in London---David is engaged at the London Theatre.—I advertiſe for a Clerk's place—am introduced to Mr. Flint, the Attorney.

THE intereſting little ſtory Miſs Atkins has favoured us with of her own life, engaged me to be equally unreſerved; nor was David behind, for he made us laugh exceedingly, at the ſhort recital of his birth, family, and education. 'I am,' ſaid David, 'of a good extrac-'tion—that is, my mother ſold old clothes 'in

'in Monmouth-ſtreet, and my father 'cried hot pies. My mother was a little 'ill-made woman all awry, with a large 'noſe; and my father a freſh-coloured 'old *gentleman*, with a white wig---- 'you muſt have heard him, Miſs,' cried David, 'at the corner of the Mews, 'calling out "hot pies." Notwith-'ſtanding, as my mother uſed to ſay, 'that our relations were *capitable* people, 'who rode in their coaches and ſixes, 'one of them being,' as ſhe ſaid, 'a ba-'ronet-knight, and the other a great 'brewer, they never took any notice 'of the poor pieman, my father! ſo we 'went on from hand to mouth, as the old 'ſaying is---for my poor Dad, when he 'had nothing to eat, fell upon his own 'pies; and my mama pawn'd when ſhe 'coudn't ſell----ſo poor I was obliged to 'look for ſomething, that I might not 'hang upon them any longer: ſo when I

ſet

'ſet up for myſelf, and was appointed pot-
'boy to the Red Lion, where I had not
'been long, before I was noticed by Mr.
'Humdrum, the prompter at Covent-
'Garden, who took me into his ſervice,
'where my education, for my mother
'taught me to read and write, was ſhort-
'ly the means of promoting me to the
'ſituation of call-boy---Happy it would
'have been for me, if I had bore my
'good fortune with coolneſs and philo-
'ſophy, but like Phe-aton, I drove too
'near the ſun, for it was at a public-
'houſe with that ſign in Drury-Lane,
'that I got in my cups one night, when
'a preſs-gang came in and took me
'away. The next morning, I found
'myſelf on board a ſhip; but it was in
'vain, that I expoſtulated and told them,
'that I was a gentleman: ſo I began to
'be ſatisfied, when I found it was no
'uſe to grumble---there was plenty of
'grub

'grub, and oceans of grog---and my 'meſſmates were a jolly ſet, who lived 'like fighting cocks. Well, David,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'it's well it's no worſe.--- 'Another misfortune, however, ſoon hap- 'pened; for finding I coudn't go aloft, 'they made a ſwaddy of me.'---"Pray what "is a ſwaddy?" interrupted Miſs Atkins.---'Why, Miſs,' cried he, 'a ſwaddy 'is a marine; but I ſoon ſhouldered my 'brown beſs as well as any of them, till 'at laſt a peace came, and I was turned 'adrift upon a grating, as you may ſay--- 'Providence, however, ſoon got me a job; 'for I luckily fell in with a *gentleman* 'who gave me the charge of a lion, a 'negro woman, an ourang outang, and a 'marmozet monkey. I and my family 'lived very comfortably together for a 'couple of years, going about from fair 'to fair, till I fell out with my maſter, 'who complained, that I had ſtarved the

'monkey to death. I, however, was ſoon 'engaged to ſuperintend a puppet-ſhew, 'where we acted the death of Julius 'Cæſar, with rope-dancing by Sieur 'Bombatti. I led a very happy life in 'this ſituation, for our family conſiſted 'only of Big-wig the manager, the fire-'eater, the rope-dancer, and punch.--- 'The *vicitudes* of human life are, how-'ever, great and ſurpriſing; for we were 'all taken up for playing without leave 'in a market-town, and put in the cage. 'I cannot ſay I was very much depreſſed 'at this accident, for I had almoſt got 'tired of being a puppet ſhew-man be-'fore it happened, and as we were not 'long before we were diſcharged, I 'thought myſelf quite in luck, when I 'procured a ſituation as candle-ſnuffer, 'and afterwards property-man, to the 'company at Burford. Lord, Miſs!' cried David, by way of concluſion, 'you'd 'have

'have been delighted to have ſeen as 'much of life as I have done: I cou'd 'amuſe ye from here to Jeruſalem, with 'the wonderful adventures I have gone 'through.' It was, however, fortunate for me, who had heard my friend David's adventures for more than eight years back; that it was too late for him to give the appendix to his ſtory that night. Indeed, after having eat a little bit of ſupper, we all felt equally diſpoſed for ſleep, which we indulged till the next morning, when we found ourſelves within ſight of London, and about eleven o'clock, we arrived at the Bull and Mouth Inn, in Alderſgate-ſtreet, where I was introduced to Mr. Howell, who was a well-made, freſh-coloured young man, with a countenance that pictured health and good-nature. Miſs Atkins did not take her leave without intreating us to to take an early walk to Peterſham—

which

which invitation was ſeconded with all the honeſt warmth of ſincerity by her lover, the young miller.

David and myſelf, after we had parted with our fellow-traveller, adjourned to a ſolitary public-houſe juſt by, where we regulated our arrangements over a glaſs, without which, I knew I was not to expect any counſel or aſſiſtance from my friend David, to whom it was as neceſſary as a fee to a learned ſerjeant in the law, or a doctor of phyſic. After ſome little argument, and difference of opinion, it was at laſt agreed, that we ſhould walk to Drury-Lane, to a Mrs. Bundle, who was an old acquaintance of his, and kept a chandler's ſhop, where we thought we could procure a decent lodging at a reaſonable price, for which place we ſet out not a little pleaſed with our plan---When we arrived, however, we found all her

her rooms taken up, except one on the attic ſtory, which reſembled exactly in ſhape, a rectangle triangle: there was, however, two beds in the room, on one of which lay a couple of large cats, who, on our entrance, made their way out of a broken caſement window—Mrs. Bundle was ſo much diſconcerted at this accident, that I really believe ſhe aſked us much leſs than ſhe intended at firſt; ſo that, after having promiſed that the caſement ſhould be repaired, and every thing made comfortable, we could do no leſs than become her tenants.

Time paſſed away very heavily while I was ſeeking for employment: I had already ſpent fifteen ſhillings in advertiſements, from which I had reaped no ſucceſs. David was more fortunate; as after dancing attendance on the prompter of Covent-Garden theatre about twenty times, he

he procured a ſituation as property-man—nor would that honeſt fellow permit me to draw any caſh from my pocket until I had got a place. At laſt, one morning, I read an advertiſement, which, though it was not the very thing I wiſhed for, engaged my attention a good deal.—It was for a copying clerk to an attorney, who was required to be a young man from the country, who could write a good hand, and had never been in place before; beſides which, it mentioned, that he was to board in the houſe.

I was too much alarmed at the precarioufneſs of my ſituation, to miſs the opportunity of being made more acquainted with the buſineſs; and went accordingly to the place where the advertiſement directed, and was ſent from thence to Villar's-ſtreet, in the Strand, to the houſe of Mr. Flint, the attorney and money

money lender, who I had the good fortune to find at home.

Mr. Flint was a man above the middle ſize, of a very ſtately deportment, with an air of conſequence and buſineſs: to add to this, he wore a pair of green ſpectacles, and a ruffled ſhirt. 'Well, young 'man,' cried he, when I came into the room, 'what do you want?' I was proceeding to acquaint him with my buſineſs, when he ſtopt me ſhort, 'Well, 'I'll talk to you preſently, go wait out-'ſide a bit, while I ſpeak to this gentle-'man;' which *gentleman* was, I believe, a butcher, who, it proved afterwards, was one of his beſt clients. I went accordingly into the entry, where I waited above half an hour, till I was called in by Mr. Flint, who ſaw his friend the butcher to the door. 'Well,' cried he, 'can you read and write?' I anſwered 'yes:'

'yes:'---'Was you ever in an office be-
'before?'---'Never, Sir;' I am juſt come from the country.—'So much the bet-
'ter,' cried he, 'call again to-morrow,
'and I'll give you an anſwer.'

I attended on Mr. Flint the next day, agreeable to his deſire; though I did not much like his addreſs, which I thought the moſt rude and unpleaſant I had ever met with; I found him ſeated in his office, tying and untying a number of papers—'Well,' cried he, 'I have
'no objection to take you—but you
'muſt be very attentive and contented
'with what I ſhall give you at firſt; you
'will lodge in the houſe, and have your
'board, and may be ſure of meeting
'with encouragement if you are diligent
'and clever.'

I thought

I thought it beſt to accept the terms Mr. Flint offered me, as I was deſtitute of employment, and thought beſides, that it would perhaps lead to ſomething more advantageous; accordingly, I agreed to commence my ſituation at the deſk the next morning.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The unpleaſant conſequences of being retained in a diſhonourable employ.---Am introduced to Mrs. Atkinſon.—The character of Miſs Flint, and the very poor opinion I begin to form of my ſituation.

I HAD not been in my new employ above a month, before I began to feel my dependence very ſeverely. I found it neceſſary, not only to ſubmit to the commands of Mr. Flint, in a ſlaviſh attendance to buſineſs, but what hurt me ſtill more, to be inſtrumental to the baſeſt and meaneſt exactions, and the moſt cruel and unjuſt advantages the proceſs of the law could take to oppreſs the

the unfortunate. It was to my intereſt, however, to be ſilent; and though my heart frequently remonſtrated with me, poverty was an idea too much impreſſed on my mind, to permit a generous and romantic virtue to ſucceed—My only ſatisfaction was, that as Mr. Flint could continue his injuſtice without me, my being with him made no difference, or rather, indeed, it ſerved to check his career—for I ſometimes contrived to retard the fatal inſtruments of miſchief, in favour of the unhappy inſolvent; and with reſpect to any advantages accruing to myſelf, there were none to accuſe me.

I was one day engaged in ſome ſuch unpleaſant reflections on the diſagreeableneſs of my ſituation, when Mr. Flint came into the office, holding a letter in his hand which he had juſt received.—— 'Here, Woodcock,' cried he, 'go di-

'rectly to Mr. Atkinſon, and tell him, 'I ſhall wait no longer, you ſhall make 'out a writ againſt him this afternoon.'— I received this news with a heavy heart, though I did not then know the object of his reſentment, and left the office with the letter in my hand, which contained Mr. Atkinſon's direction. Curioſity made me examine the contents of a letter, which had given ſo much offence, and which, I found, to my aſtoniſhment, to be as follows:

'DEAR SIR,

'My recent misfortunes have put it 'out of my power to take up the note 'which became due yeſterday: I ſhall 'be able to do it before the expira- 'tion of the week, and truſt you will be 'good enough to ſhew that indulgence to 'a young man, whoſe difficulties have not

'been

'been the conſequence of extravagance
'or indiſcretion---My dear Lucy makes
'herſelf ſecure in your clemency.

'Your humble Servant,

'G. ATKINSON.'

Such was the letter which Mr. Flint had received, and on which he pronounced the harſh ſentence of the law. I am ſure, every good mind will be pleaſed to hear, that I felt, at this moment, a glow of indignation, which neither intereſt or prudence had power to check. I grew ſick at heart, with reflecting on my ſituation; while my head was ſo confuſed with a thouſand different ideas, that the people who paſſed me in the ſtreets, appeared to be rather the figures of imagination that human beings.

It was not long before I arrived at Mr. Atkinſon's houſe, which was in Frith-ſtreet, Soho-ſquare. The door was opened to me by a genteel looking woman dreſt in black; I inquired if Mr. Atkinſon was at home? to which ſhe anſwered, no; but that if I would walk into the parlour, ſhe would take any meſſage I had to leave. 'I call, Madam,' ſaid I, 'from Mr. Flint, he has received 'a letter this morning from Mr. Atkin-'ſon.'---'Yes, Sir,' returned ſhe, 'and 'he is very eager to know the anſwer.' I obſerved at this moment, though Mrs. Atkinſon looked with all the complacency in her power, an agony of apprehenſion in her face, which took ſuch an effect on my ſpirits, that I was almoſt incapable of giving her the meſſage I had received from Mr. Flint: however, as the conſequences of delay might have been fatal to their endeavours to procure the

money, I thought it my duty to inform her of the worſt, though it was with pain that I ſaid---'Mr. Flint will not wait, 'Madam'----'Not wait!' replied Mrs. Atkinſon, (the little colour adverſity had left on her cheek retiring as ſhe ſpoke) ---'Good God! what ſhall we do?' I would have given any thing to have been abſent from ſuch an affecting ſcene; ſhe had now thrown herſelf into a chair that was near her, but uttered not a ſingle ſyllable for ſeveral minutes. I had ſome fears ſhe had fainted away, till in the midſt of a torrent of tears, ſhe exclaimed, 'Well,' if Mr. Flint ſays ſo, 'we are ruined! we are in his power!'--- So much the more pity, ſaid I, to myſelf, almoſt involuntarily---'What does he in-'tend to do with us?' continued Mrs. Atkinſon, 'How far will he carry his re-'venge?---Is he at home, Sir?---Can I 'ſee him?' Though I knew it would

be highly diſagreeable to Mr. Flint, I was determined in my own mind to be inſtrumental to a meeting, that might, perhaps, *force* him into humanity; for tho' there is little to be expected from men of his character, they ſometimes, from pride or ſhame, act contrary to their general principle of conduct, and *play* the part of liberality.

At the requeſt of Mrs. Atkinſon, I called a hackney-coach, which ſet us down within a few doors of Mr. Flint's houſe, for I knew very well, that unleſs I managed it ſo, as to introduce Mrs. Atkinſon without his knowledge, her perſon would moſt effectually have barred her entrance; the ſervant who opened the door, could not at all ſuſpect the buſineſs, and if he had, from her manner, appeared much too good-natured to have prepared

prepared her maſter, ſo that Mrs. Atkinſon went with me into the office.

Mr. Flint was no ſooner informed of my return, than he came down ſtairs and walked in with his ſpectacles in one hand, and a bond in the other. I muſt do him the juſtice to ſay, that when he ſaw Mrs. Atkinſon, he ſeemed very much confounded, but a bad man is never long at a loſs to find excuſes for his conduct---his, was the want of punctuality in Mr. Atkinſon, and the intruſion ſhe had made, as he called it, on his buſineſs. Mrs. Atkinſon addreſſed him on her part with a low curtſey; the tears in her eyes, and her whole deportment, that of oppreſſed humility. 'Well, Madam,' cried Mr. Flint, 'what would you have with me?' 'I wait upon you, Sir, to requeſt, that 'you will have the goodneſs to ſtop a 'week for the payment of the note which

'became due yeſterday.'—'That I can-'not do,' anſwered he, 'your huſband 'ſhould have taken care of it; the bill is 'out of my hands.'---'But, Sir, you can 'prevent his being ſued for a few days, 'perhaps:'—'That I am ſure, I ſhan't,' returned Mr. Flint, 'he has brought it 'all upon himſelf; he ſhould have paid 'the note when it became due; I have 'nothing at all to do with it; and I 'have too much buſineſs on my hands 'to give you any more of my time juſt 'now---If he had behaved with punctu-'ality, I am ſure, I ſhould have been the 'laſt man in the world to have done him 'an injury.' It was impoſſible for Mr. Flint to find a better excuſe for his cruelty and oppreſſion, than the doctrine of right he maintained: all he did was juſtice, and the law his redreſs;----he would never conſider, that the firſt ought not to extend puniſhment beyond the crime;

crime; and for the latter, he thought himſelf at liberty to make uſe of all the advantages it afforded him. He was always cool and collected in his buſineſs, every tranſaction came before him as a caſe to be decided upon according to law, without equity or humanity having any thing to do with the decree; the *Law Reports* guarded him from the dangers of mal-practice, and as for his conſcience it was perfectly at eaſe.

It was with great difficulty that Mrs. Atkinſon, by entreaty and ſubmiſſion, prevailed on Mr. Flint to ſtop a few minutes longer; for which piece of condeſcenſion, he ſported with every feeling ſhe poſſeſſed, by the moſt unjuſt and illiberal reflections on her huſband. The weak and oppreſſed have no way to contend with power: this circumſtance makes ſtrongly for a future ſtate; for unleſs

there is another world, where the humble heart will be made amends, and the proud and unfeeling puniſhed, religion and morality were vain, and religion a curſe.

Some converſation now enſued between Mr. Flint and Mrs. Atkinſon, on the impoſſibility of her huſband's paying the note, and on the terms he propoſed, when I was happy to find Mr. Flint deliberated on the circumſtances in his own mind with more temper than before: 'I 'am ſure, I do not wiſh,' ſaid he, 'to 'hurt Mr. Atkinſon. If he will give 'me a ſecurity, I have no objection to 'give him time to pay the money.'—'He 'has no ſecurity,' replied Mrs. Atkinſon, 'but his own to offer—we have no 'friends now:'---'Well, I'll take his 'Warrant of Attorney,' interrupted Mr. Flint, 'payable by inſtallments; but I 'hope he will be punctual to his pay-

'ments—I don't want to hurt the poor 'man, not I.' Mrs. Atkinſon received this offer, as if it had been a reprieve from misfortune, ſigned by the hand of Heaven—ſhe even thanked Mr. Flint for his generoſity in the ſtrongeſt words of gratitude, nor was I leſs pleaſed. It was not eaſy for me to imagine his real motives; but for the honour of human nature, I placed his ſeverity to the account of juſtice and exactitude, and his forbearance to that of humanity.

I was now diſpatched with Mrs. Atkinſon, to get her huſband to execute the Warrant of Attorney Mr. Flint had drawn up. The agony of fear and apprehenſion that had reigned in the countenance of the lovely Mrs. Atkinſon, was now ſupplanted by a ſweetneſs and compoſure, the effect of her ſucceſs. There is nothing more pleaſing to the good mind than to

prevail in favour of thoſe they love. Mrs. Atkinſon's whole converſation turned on her having ſettled the buſineſs to the advantage of her huſband; for though their embarraſſments were not at an end, ſtill they were ſo far removed, that hope and expectation could not fail of promiſing means to provide for the diſtant payments Mr. Flint required. It was with pain that I obſerved, throughout Mrs. Atkinſon's deportment and diſcourſe, an elegance of manner, and a ſuperiority of mind, that made her ſituation a reproach to the world. I could not fail of being intereſted in the fortunes of an amiable and accompliſhed woman, who had every recommendation a good heart and refined education could give; nothing could be more extraordinary than the change which appeared in her behaviour after her ſucceſs, which ſerved to ſhew, that diſtreſs of mind not only damps the ſpirit of

of exertion, but fetters the demeanour with an awkward conſtraint, not to be ſhaken off.

It was not long before Mrs. Atkinſon expreſſed her fears and intentions to me, in the moſt unreſerved manner; ſhe ſeemed aſſured, that I ſhould not betray her: her eyes had frequently met mine during her converſation with Mr. Flint, and I believe, though we had not uttered a ſyllable, thoſe organs would have made us friends.

When we came to Mr. Atkinſon's houſe, I had an opportunity of philoſophizing by myſelf for ſome minutes, on the wretchedneſs of an involved ſtate, which was not a little aſſiſted by the appearance of the rooms and furniture: the tables covered with duſt; the ſide-board nearly ſtript; the windows dirty, and the floors

floors unſwept; nothing could picture more truly the laſt ſtruggles of ſituation.

Mr. Atkinſon was not long before he came down ſtairs; he was a tall, genteel man, rather thin, and dreſt in black; in his face an uneaſineſs of mind was expreſſively depictured; ſorrow and diſappointment ſeemed to have extinguiſhed every other trait: he received us with a dejection of ſpirits, natural to his ſituation; his eyes, however, ſeemed to ſhine (though feebly) at the reſpite he had obtained, and he ſigned at once the inſtrument I brought, which was to pay two guineas every week. Though Mr. Atkinſon received me with great politeneſs, I could diſcover, he declined entering into converſation; and I took my leave, not a little pleaſed at having ended this diſagreeable buſineſs ſo much better than

I ex-

I expected. I returned home immediately, and was received by Mr. Flint with all the dignity his ſituation over me could give him. He ſeemed determined to make me feel at once his authority and diſpleaſure: 'Pray, Sir,' ſaid he, as I entered the door of his room, 'how came 'you to bring that woman to my houſe?' I anſwered, 'that I did not know that it 'was wrong to do ſo:'—'You are to 'mind, Sir,' ſaid he, 'my inſtructions, 'and to attend to the buſineſs of the of-'fice; and if I find that you neglect or 'delay my affairs, to promote the inter-'eſt of any one, that moment I ſhall turn 'you out of my ſervice.' Though I could not very well reſent this treatment, at the moment, I reſolved to treaſure in my memory the inſult I had received, till I could be at liberty to tell Mr. Flint what I really thought of him, and to make him feel, in my turn, a ſuperiority

riority he could not readily conceive,—that of the mind: for he could never bring himſelf to think, a deſtitute man would contend with one that had power and money; or that if he did, that ſucceſs could poſſibly attend his remonſtrances: thus it is, the proud man is deceived with his imaginary conſequence, till a reverſe of fortune makes him at once contemptible and wretched.

I retired as ſoon as I poſſibly could to my own room; and taking my flute in my hand, played a few Scotch airs, which amuſement removed conſiderably the aſperity I had indulged: it was not my diſpoſition to ruminate long on diſagreeables---and I received great conſolation from the determination I had made, to leave Mr. Flint the very firſt opportunity. I had amuſed myſelf in this way ſome time, and was going very gaily down

down ſtairs when I met Miſs Flint. The feathers which adorned her head firſt attracted my notice, nodding with the ſtately action of the wearer; her petticoats were held up in front with an air of quality, and ſhe was giving orders all the way ſhe aſcended, to a ſervant in the hall: as I perceived it would be impoſſible to paſs my young miſtreſs on the ſtairs, I ſtood on one ſide at the landing place, and made her a low bow, which was returned by a moſt impudent ſtare---after which ſhe paſſed on, without taking any other notice whatever. I believe my indignation, at this moment, would have made me have expreſſed myſelf not very reſpectfully, had I not been prevented by the conſiderations of my dependency on her father: I muſt own, however, that this little accident ſerved to chagrin me moſt completely; I already blamed my own meanneſs, and longed

longed to be freed from my engagements to Mr. Flint. As ſoon as I got to the office, I ſeated myſelf on a high ſtool placed for the convenience of writing, and leaning over the deſk, went into a reverie which continued near half an hour. What a difference, ſaid I to myſelf, is there between poor Mrs. Atkinſon and this proud imp of wickedneſs, my maſter's daughter!---the one humble and good-natured, with ſoft engaging manners; the other filled with pride and arrogance---Mrs. Atkinſon, moſt likely a woman of good education; Miſs Flint, a fungus, a muſhroom foſtered in vice and meanneſs, who had received part of her education from a ſelfiſh father, and the reſt at a boarding-ſchool in the country, famous for making its pupils ſtudy the faſhions and laws of etiquette, more than morality or accompliſhments of the mind. Such were the

the reflections which naturally occurred to me on contemplating thoſe very different characters, and which ſerved me for a ſubject the remaining part of the day.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

I become acquainted with Sally Beeſom, the ſervant-maid; ſome good qualities to be found in the loweſt order of people.—Am more pleaſed with my ſituation, and make rapid approaches to the favour of Mr. Flint.

IT is our own fault, if we are diſſatisfied with a ſituation in the world which can afford us the neceſſary comforts of life: the lot of riches or honours is drawn but by a few---and thoſe few are not a jot happier than their fellow-creatures. I felt very little hurt at being obliged to eat and drink in the kitchen, or at being treated like a do-

meſtic:

meſtic: my mind was humble and at eaſe on theſe occaſions; but I was ſtill proud enough to reſent every perſonal inſult, and obeyed with reluctance every oppreſſive command I received from Mr. Flint, whom I began to deſpiſe moſt heartily.

There are many in the world who would, perhaps, bear very ill the neceſſity of paſſing their evenings at a kitchen fire-ſide: for my part, I was never more comfortable than when I was ſeated at the wooden table with Sally Beeſom, reading plays, or telling ſtories; this good-natured girl ſeemed to be one of thoſe characters, in whoſe mind the ſocial principle was ſtrongly impreſſed. On my firſt coming into the houſe, ſhe received me as if it was a pleaſure to her to protect a ſtranger; every thing was made comfortable for me in her department; and

and all the recompence ſhe ſeemed to wiſh for, was for me to be pleaſed with my reception, and happy in my ſituation. Though Sally was a girl of good ſenſe and very good-humoured, ſhe was not very taciturn—She had the hiſtory of her maſter and young miſtreſs always in recollection, and could pourtray their follies and abſurdities with a very happy delineation. Neceſſity only made her remain in a place, where ſhe had ſcarcely any of the common comforts of life; for the meanneſs which governed all Mr. Flint's actions, would not let him allow the uſual expenſes of houſe-keeping: a very little indulgence and liberality would have made Sally an excellent ſervant, for ſhe was induſtrious and grateful; and though ſhe thought ſhe had a right to judge on ſome occaſions, was altogether humble and diſcreet.

It would be of ſervice to people of all ranks in ſuperior life, were they to reflect, within themſelves, on the conſequences which attend their treatment of ſervants; very frequently are complaints made of the badneſs of domeſtics, when, if the cauſe was inquired into, it would be found to originate in the management of the maſters and miſtreſſes; ſome treat them with haughtineſs and ſuperciliouſneſs, ſurely the human mind, however humble, muſt reſent this unjuſt behaviour; others treat them one moment with familiarity, and at the next, abuſe them with the groſſeſt language; what can be the conſequence, but freedom and inſolence; how can people expect to be reſpected who do every thing to render themſelves contemptible? ſurely it were a better way to treat the inferior with kindneſs and humanity, and to inforce our commands by a manner which would occaſion both

love

love and fear in the mind of the domeſtic; the *ſuaviter in modo, fortiter in ſe*, gentleneſs of manner and firmneſs of mind, is a very neceſſary maxim for the maſter of a family.

Very few people could have a worſe idea of governing a family than Miſs Sigiſmunda Flint; pride was the grand feature in this young lady's character, and had poiſoned every good quality ſhe might have poſſeſſed in infancy; her wretched affectation and falſe delicacy laid her open, continually, to the contempt of thoſe about her, and her love of extravagance and pleaſure was to her father, like a ſcorpion ſucking at parſimony and meanneſs: I could not help thinking, very often, that that Being who ſees all our actions would, one day or other, render the wretched ſchemes of this man a curſe, and that his own child would be the inſtrument of vengeance.

A Sun-

A Sunday afternoon was the only time which I had to look to for peace and happineſs, Mr. Flint and our young lady were always, on that day, at a country houſe, which he had bought on purpoſe to gratify her pride.---We were uſually in the afternoon favoured with the company of my friend David, who ſmoaked his pipe in the chimney corner; and, with his good humour, added to our mirth---The ſatisfaction which I felt in this ſituation cannot eaſily be conceived by the proud or diſſipated mind; my principal pleaſures conſiſted in converſing with David and Sally Beeſom, or in taking a long walk into the country, or in reading the works of different authors; I had no hopes or fears about my ſituation to torment me; futurity was a blank, which I was willing Providence ſhould fill up as it pleaſed, ſo as I had where-withall to live.

This happineſs did not, however, laſt long; I had begun to find a change in Mr. Flint's diſpoſition, which I could not eaſily account for; he ſeemed more unreſerved and good humoured, and would frequently talk to me on the buſineſs of the office, and tell me that I improved in my profeſſion; one day in particular, he addreſſed me as we ſat in the office together, in the following words: 'Mr. 'Woodcock, you ſeem to me to be a 'young man of ſome abilities, I am not 'fond of keeping a great many clerks, 'but if you like to be articled to me I 'have no objection to accept your ſer-'vices; it will get you into a genteel 'profeſſion, and I don't think that I ſhall 'follow it much longer.'---I cannot ſay but I felt flattered at the very friendly offer Mr. Flint made me, and I thought it my duty to ſay, in return, that I ſhould be very happy to remain with him on any terms.

terms. 'You will have only to recollect, replied Mr. Flint, 'that you are now to 'conſider yourſelf a man of buſineſs, and 'muſt not let any falſe notions of humanity 'obſtruct you in the purſuit of it; it is 'very unpleaſant--I will admit, to be 'obliged to act with ſeverity, but we 'muſt do it for the good of our clients, 'and for our own advantage---for my part, 'I have never found, that, ſhewing too 'much lenity ever had a good effect, on 'the contrary, I have met with a great 'deal of ingratitude from people I have 'indulged, and have always obſerved, they 'were the moſt ready to take an advan-'tage.'---Such was the reaſoning Mr. Flint made uſe of to do away the appearances that were againſt him, and to ſupport, if poſſible, a character that was conſtantly attacked with the boldeſt aſſertions the tongue of report could utter; I, however, was obliged to aſſent to all

he ſaid, ſo well can an artful man blend truth in the miſchievous doctrines he would endeavour to eſtabliſh---I was now frequently invited to dine with Mr. Flint, at which times I always experienced the moſt mortifying behaviour from my young miſtreſs; however, after ſhe had retired from table I enjoyed (if it could be called enjoyment) the full confidence of her father, who was always taking freſh opportunities to engraft in my mind the principles he himſelf had acted from, the neceſſity of ſharp practice, and exactneſs in buſineſs---this ſort of converſation always was followed by a biographical account of thoſe characters who had raiſed themſelves in the profeſſion by ſuch meaſures.

I cannot ſay that I felt much pleaſed with the progreſs I made in Mr. Flint's favour, and the honour of being ſeated at his table; I was doubtful as to the value

of

of his friendſhip, and felt aukward at civilities ſhewn me by a man whom I knew to be proud and diſtant. I found, however, a ſpark of pride in my own breaſt that I did not know I was poſſeſſed of. I began to like the proſpect of being placed in a genteel line of life, and, for the ideal pleaſure of having a little conſequence of office, was near loſing the moſt valuable of all poſſeſſions----ſelf-ſatisfaction.

My friend Sally was the firſt who informed me of the danger of my ſituation, and hinted in terms I did not then wiſh to approve, or even underſtand, the motives that engaged Mr. Flint to ſerve me; David could very wiſely foreſee ſomething, but he could not tell what, while my own ideas fluctuated between the hopes of being able to appear genteel and reſpectable, and the fear that I was doing

wrong.---Term time, however, having commenced, I received, in the courſe of buſineſs, ſo many flattering proofs of Mr. Flint's friendſhip, that they could not fail of overturning moſt of my ſcruples; money was no longer an object of envy, I had as much as I could reaſonably wiſh for; from almoſt every buſineſs that was ſettled I received a preſent, and was taught to conſider, that the more I made up the bill of coſts, the more I might expect for myſelf. To add to my good fortune, Miſs Flint began to be very gracious, ſo that I found myſelf advancing very faſt in the favour of both, and had no other reaſon to be diſſatisfied than from what I felt on reflection, which a man of the world would call, conſcientious nonſenſe, but which is certainly enough to poiſon our happineſs.

I had

I had already received above ten pounds from my liberal benefactor, who even frequently offered to lend me money to keep up my appearance, which I very readily accepted; indeed I ſhould have been loaded with many more ſuch favours, had not I accidentally mentioned to my friend Sally, the obligations I was under to her maſter, when ſhe entreated me, in the moſt earneſt manner, not to receive any more money from him in that way; 'he 'has already,' ſaid ſhe, 'ruined one young 'man by his artful methods and ſchemes, 'who came into his office as a clerk; I am 'ſure I pitied him, for my maſter kept 'him under his thumb, and made him 'do all his raſcally work for a long time, 'till one day they happened to fall out, 'when he put the poor young fellow into 'priſon for different ſums of money,' he ſaid, 'he had lent him.'--'Good God!' ſaid I, 'is it poſſible that a man could behave

'with ſo much baſeneſs.' 'Yes,' cried ſhe, 'and more than that, I believe he always 'perſuaded the poor young man that he 'gave him the money for his ſervices, till 'he offended him, and even after that, 'he offered to take him out of priſon 'and forgive him the debt if he would 'return to the office; but he found friends 'to raiſe the money and refuſed to come 'back again.'—'What then am I to ex-'pect,' ſaid I, 'for I am even unable to pay 'him what I have already had, and have no 'friends.'---'Do not be unhappy about it,' cried Sally, 'get no further in debt and I'll 'lend you the money if there is occaſion. --There was ſomething ſo uncommon and generous in my friend Sally's offer, that the ſatisfaction it gave me almoſt remov-ed, for a moment, the diſagreeable im-preſſion her obſervations had made. 'My 'dear Sally,' cried I, 'you are a good 'creature, and the ſooner we both leave this

'houſe,

'houſe, the better: I would not ſuffer,' ſaid I, 'the mean and dangerous depen-'dence Mr. Flint has impoſed on me to be 'worth hundreds;' in which opinion my good friend, Sally Beeſom, joined me; in ſhort we both agreed, that the beſt way to be happy, for poor people, was to purchaſe it with labour and honeſty, and that as for the rich, they were ſeldom happy at all.

CHAP. X.

I am introduced to a new character, Miſs Lydia Holdtight—with an account of my friend David's courtſhip and converſion.

DURING my being in Mr. Flint's ſervice, my friend David was almoſt a conſtant viſitor on a Sunday: however, I began to think, that he neglected me a little more than uſual, and that he was more diſtant and reſerved; in this opinion I was confirmed, when I diſcovered by accident, that he had an amour with a lady who lodged at Mrs. Bundle's houſe. It was not till ſome time afterwards, that I obtained his promiſe to introduce me to Miſs Lydia Hold-

Holdtight, who, it ſeems, was his next door neighbour, up two pair of ſtairs; I was at laſt, however, invited to tea, and dreſt myſelf for the occaſion.

Miſs Lydia was one of thoſe deſcriptions of Weſley's followers, who almoſt put religion out of countenance by their ſhocking and impious enthuſiaſm. She was in perſon above the middle ſize, thin and meagre, and the form of her features would have decided her faith and profeſſion, for there never was any thing more demure---not even the well-practiſed viſage of an undertaker's man, who occaſionally acted as chief mourner. Miſs Lydia almoſt conſtantly wore a cap, (the ſtrings of which were left to wave in h wind) nd a red cloak with an enormous hood; in this uncommon attire, ſhe would frequently walk five or ſix

miles to different meetings, without either bonnet or hat, regardleſs of the weather, by which, I ſuppoſe, her faith kept her dry. Numerous were the anecdotes of this lady, which Sally Beeſom (who formerly knew her) related to me, and at which, however diſpoſed to be ſerious, I was obliged to laugh moſt heartily.

Miſs Lydia Holdtight, though conſidered one of the beſt Chriſtians in the world, was ſometimes chagrined and put out of temper by thoſe little perverſe accidents and croſſes, that will happen at times to the beſt of people, but which ſhe always very devoutly aſcribed to the Devil. Indeed, I never knew, from what Sally told me, two people more conſtantly at variance, than the arch fiend and Miſs Lydia, as will appear from the following little circumſtances and facts, which may ſerve to elucidate her character.

racter. One day in November, poor Miſs Lydia had the misfortune to ſlip off the ſtep of a ſhop-door, from whence ſhe rolled into the kennel, to the infinite amuſement of ſome boys who were playing at marbles, when ſhe raiſed herſelf upright in the mud, and ſaid very cooly, 'Ah, Satan has done it!' Another time, by ſome accident, a large black Tom cat got by ſome means into her room, and was repoſing on the coverlid of her bed, but on being diſturbed flew out of the window, 'Ah, fly away from me, do 'Satan,' cried Miſs Lydia; 'what ſhape 'will you take next to tempt me?'— Some little time after this, poor Lydia was going to market one day, when a miſchievous lad put a big round ſtone into the hood of her cloak, which ſhe no ſooner felt, than ſhe exclaimed, 'So 'you are there again, are you, Satan! 'that's right, do your worſt.' Miſs Lydia

Lydia was not, however, on the other ſide, inſenſible to the bleſſings of Providence, which ſhe, however, confounded with the article of faith;---a poor dog belonging to the houſe, happened one day to run into her room, with the beſt part of a ſhoulder of mutton that he had ſtolen from below, which ſhe immediately ſeized on as a lawful prize, as ſhe had not dined, aſcribing the accident to the wonderful intervention of Providence. In ſhort, ſo many were the inſtances of Miſs Lydia's faith and good works, that it was not to be wondered at, if my friend David felt a ſort of liking for ſo amiable an object: he began already to ſpeak of the new light, which, by the bye, I believe, was nothing more than getting *light* of two hundred pounds which ſhe had in the ſtocks: to ſucceed, however, with his fair Lydia, it was neceſſary for my friend David to leave the play-houſe, and to forego

forego all his former naughty habits and cuſtoms, ſuch as drinking, ſwearing, &c. and to promiſe to become a *new man*. Fortunately for David, or at leaſt for his deſigns, he was in the earlier part of his courtſhip taken very ill of the rheumatiſm in his back, which circumſtance occaſioned the intimacy which ſubſiſted between him and his ſweet Lydia: ſhe adminiſtered to him opodeldoc in abundance, and had even ventured to embrocate the diſeaſed part with her own hand. It was at theſe times that ſhe expoſtulated with him about the vice of ſwearing, for I believe he had one day inadvertently called out, whilſt in excruciating pain, 'd—n the rheumatiſm:' he had, however, been with her ſince ſeveral times to the meeting in Weſt-ſtreet, where he ſhewed ſuch ſtrong tokens of grace in her ſight, that ſhe took him inſtantly into her favour, and was by her initiated

initiated in the myſteries of the bun-feaſts and watchings—beſides which, ſhe made him a preſent of Weſley's journal, that he might grow ſtrong in faith.

David had expreſſed himſelf ſo highly pleaſed with the thoughts of being united to Miſs Lydia, that he would have been quite offended if I had diſapproved; he aſſured me very ſeriouſly, that he had gone wrong all his life, and that he was now about to walk in the way of righteouſneſs, and even went ſo far as to refuſe a drop of excellent brandy offered him by Sally Beeſom, till I inſiſted, that it was allowed by the moſt rigid of the Methodiſts, who took a drop now and then by the way of cordial, and that I was ſure Miſs Lydia herſelf did it:—David anſwered, 'that it might be ſo; 'but then, it was only a ſup to keep out 'the cold.' It ſeems, my friend David had

had mentioned me to Miſs Lydia as a young man of exemplary morals, and of modeſt deportment, under which character, I could only have been introduced. I was, in conſequence of this preparation, received very kindly by Miſs Lydia, who alſo introduced me to her friend Sukey Vandoe, her ſiſter in faith and profeſſion, a little woman, all on one ſide, with a head that ſhook ſomewhat like a mandarine figure; and to Mr. Oily, a preacher, who had paid a viſit to his children that evening, for it was his rule to dine and drink tea with one or other of his flock every day. Miſs Lydia took an opportunity, before I had been in the room five minutes, to tell me what a *comfortable* man Mr. Oily was. I took care to behave with the decorum my friend David wiſhed, who had ſat for above ten minutes without uttering a ſyllable; his face began to work with a number

number of different contortions, ſomething like thoſe of a grimacer at a fair; his eyes at one minute fixed on Mr. Oily, and the next rolling about like quick-ſilver in a perpetual motion. I could not, for my part, find any thing very comfortable in Mr. Oily's diſcourſe; for he did not heſitate to thunder down the moſt heavy curſes and denunciations upon all who were not, as he called it, 'new 'born,' or 'firm on the bank of faith:' —'Ay, Mr. Dobbins,' cried Miſs Lydia, 'liſten to Mr. Oily, he will comfort 'you—you know you have been a hard-'ened ſinner.'—'I am, indeed, a ſinner,' anſwered David, ſtarting upright in his chair.---'Don't be afflicted,' cried Mr. Oily, 'I can ſee the ſpirit is working in 'you.'——'Don't be diſhearten'd, my 'lamb,' cried Miſs Lydia. —'The grace 'is coming down upon him,' cried Sukey Van-

Vandoe.——The two ſiſters had now each of them taken the hand of poor David, who ſeemed quite in a trance; during which, Mr. Oily made a long unintelligible prayer; after which, they all popt down upon their knees, and remained to appearance, with every faculty abſorbed; except that of groaning, which had all the charms of diſcord. Miſs Lydia's voice reſembled high G.----Mr. Oily's low D.----David's F. ſharp, and Sukey Vandoe's A. in alt, which made a moſt dreadful accompanyment. The tea had been left cooling on the table during this enthuſiaſtic delirium, when at laſt, they all recovered at once, and declared they felt themſelves the children of grace; and it was ſoon after propoſed, that we ſhould put a little brandy in our cups to make the cold tea palatable. I remained with my new friends till a general move

was

was made to go to meeting, from which I excuſed myſelf by pleading the neceſſity of returning home, which I did, not a little diſguſted at the characters with whom I had paſſed my time. 'Good God!' ſaid I, as I was retiring to bed,' 'how 'has thy Almighty name and goodneſs 'been abuſed by thoſe who call them-'ſelves thy followers;---every low, blaſ-'phemous, and familiar term has been 'uſed to ſpeak thy attributes and mer-'cies---and a collection of tenets main-'tained, that excludes cheerfulneſs from 'the human breaſt, and robs it of its moſt 'noble poſſeſſion---"the reaſon of man," 'which tells us thy power and goodneſs in 'the ſtill hour of midnight, and directs us 'to addreſs thee in humble and unaſſum-'ing prayer.' It was, however, a pleaſing reflection to me, that many of the ſect I have deſcribed, are the worthy followers of worthy men, who are ſuperior to hypo-

hypocriſy and the *trick* of devotion: for, ſurely, true religion ſtands in no need of management to influence the mind.--- Such were the reflections which occurred to me on the change I found in my friend's character, whoſe loſs I as ſincerely regretted, as if he had been dead.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

I am invited to drink tea with Mrs. Atkinſon—the converſation that enſues, with a part of the Hiſtory of that lady.

I HAD received ſo many kind invitations from Mrs. Atkinſon, who came regularly to the office to pay her inſtalments, that I, at laſt, promiſed to drink tea with her one evening when I had little to do; indeed I felt myſelf too much intereſted in her character to neglect ſo good an opportunity of being made acquainted with her ſtory, which ſhe had told me, was not a little remarkable.—I took care to be at Mr. Atkinſon's houſe

in the afternoon, as ſoon as I could, which was not till near tea time, when I found her at home expecting me; the tea things on the table, and all her little equipage in order.—Nothing could be more pleaſant than the reception Mrs. Atkinſon gave me, ſhe ſeemed to be in rather better ſpirits than uſual, and her fine eyes reſuming a little of their former brilliancy, ſhone with the welcome ſhe expreſſed--- She informed me that Mr. Atkinſon was juſt gone out to meet a gentleman on ſome buſineſs, which, ſhe hoped, would be advantageous, and that ſhe did not expect him back till ſupper time.

I could not help admiring the peculiar neatneſs and management with which Mrs. Atkinſon did the honours (if I may uſe the expreſſion) of her little table; her tea equipage conſiſted of ſome plain white and blue china, which was all perfect

fect and uniform; every thing was clean and in its place, a plate of toaſt which ſhe had made with her own hands, was put before a winter's fire, blazing with hoſpitality; theſe little duties may at firſt appear, as neceſſary and common, but when it is known that Mrs. Atkinſon was a woman of refined habits and education, it will make much for her good ſenſe and humbleneſs of mind.

I was at firſt a good deal ſurpriſed at the change I ſaw in the apartments, till I recollected that the little interval of ſafety Mrs. Atkinſon had procured from Mr. Flint, gave her the opportunity to reſtore her furniture to ſome order, in which ſhe muſt have been uncommonly induſtrious.

We were now ſeated by the fire-ſide, when Mrs. Atkinſon employed herſelf in pouring out my tea, and affording me every little comfort and accommodation in her

her power—It was impoſſible for me to be long reſerved with ſuch an intereſting character, I was determined to enter upon a ſubject, on which I ſo much longed to be informed, and which promiſed ſo fairly to recompence my curioſity, 'I am ſure, 'Madam, I give you a great deal of trou-'ble,' ſaid I, 'you have not been uſed to 'attend yourſelf to theſe domeſtic con-'cerns,'---'Oh dear!' returned Mrs. Atkinſon, 'pray don't think ſo, it ſerves to 'amuſe me, it is quite a pleaſure to me; 'if we were but clear of embarraſſments 'I ſhould be the happieſt woman in the 'world, to live in this little comfortable 'way, and wait upon myſelf.'---'Then it 'muſt be,' cried I, 'that you have a very 'good and a very humble heart, for, to 'a proud one, viciſſitude would not be 'borne quite ſo eaſily.'---Mrs. Atkinſon ſeemed a little ſurpriſed at what I had ſaid; ſhe had, I dare ſay, merely aſked

me to drink tea with her, out of gratitude, for ſome little favours I had done her, with reſpect to the payments on the warrant of attorney, which I could let remain over a day or two without Mr. Flint's knowing any thing of the matter; or if ſhe had felt any ſort of friendſhip for me, it was from my diſpoſition and my ignorance of Mr. Flint's principles; ſhe could not expect much underſtanding or education from an attorney's clerk, nor look for more than the natural and honeſt feelings of the heart.---She ſeemed to wiſh to recompence me for having thus, as ſhe imagined, undervalued my mind. 'You ſpeak, Sir,' cried Mrs. Atkinſon, 'as if you were acquainted with the name of viciſſitude.'---'No, Madam,' ſaid I, 'I have hitherto filled too hum-
'ble a ſtation in life to feel much from
'the changes of fortune, her frowns
'could not eaſily affect me; ſhe never

'yet

'yet raiſed me ſo high as to make a fall 'dangerous to my peace; I have hitherto 'been ſatisfied with my lot, and have 'had no bright proſpects to look to; but, 'Madam,' continued I, 'I am much 'miſtaken if that has been the caſe with 'you; I would avoid giving you pain, 'and yet I cannot ſuppreſs my deſire to 'know more of a lady who has already 'intereſted me ſo much; at the firſt mo-'ment I had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, 'I felt that diſpoſition, where the heart 'becomes engaged in another's favour, 'without knowing for why, and is deſi-'rous only to do them good.'---'You are 'very kind,' cried Mrs. Atkinſon, 'but 'I am ſure you do not ſay all the truth 'reſpecting yourſelf, for your manner 'and converſation convince me you have 'received the principles of humanity, 'and honour, in a liberal education.'--- 'Indeed, Madam,' returned I, 'to tell you

'the truth, I was born and brought up 'amongſt a ſet of people who are conſi- 'dered as far from a reſpectable order of 'ſociety, nor have I received any other 'education than what was given by a 'fond mother; I do not know that I have 'a relation in the world, and as for friends, 'I know not where to find them.'--'Sure- 'ly!' cried Mrs. Atkinſon, with a heavy ſigh, 'I perceive, in ſome reſpects, our 'ſtories are not unlike; you will, perhaps, 'favour me with a more particular ac- 'count.'--'I wiſh, Madam,' ſaid I, 'that 'I was ſufficiently in your confidence to 'engage you to relate your hiſtory, which, 'I am certain, muſt be very intereſting.' '---I aſſure you,' returned ſhe, 'I have no 'objection, I am confident you will be too 'generous to take any advantages from 'what I muſt diſcloſe, as I will confeſs, 'I cannot give you my narrative without 'introducing Mr. Flint in no very re-

'ſpectable

'ſpectable light.'—'Madam,' cried I, 'you need not be reſerved, my mind is 'not fettered with either intereſt or preju-'judice, nor can I ſay that Mr. Flint has 'obtained, in my mind, a very good 'opinion; I am ſure, however, your 'candour will not permit you to miſrepre-'ſent the actions of even a man that you 'diſlike.'—I recited, as briefly as I could, the particulars of my birth and my adventures, ſince I left Burford, though I was ſo very eager to hear Mrs. Atkinſon's ſtory, that, I believe, I left out many circumſtances, which I ſhould otherwiſe have related; ſhe, however, paid me very great attention, and ſeemed to feel all the alternate changes of the ſcenes I deſcribed. I obſerved, that when I mentioned the incidents attending my birth, ſhe was involved in thought, till ſomething leſs ſerious engaged her attention.—'Well, 'Mr. Woodcock,' cried Mrs. Atkinſon,

after I had finiſhed my narrative, 'there 'is ſomething very myſterious in the ſtory 'of your birth, and which, in ſome cir-'cumſtances, reſembles my own; for, al-'though I was brought up in all the ſplen-'dour and elegance of the faſhionable 'world, I am ignorant who my parents 'were; and what is ſtill more extraordi-'nary, am unacquainted with the views of 'thoſe who took care of my education, 'and introduced me into life.'

THE HISTORY OF MRS. ATKINSON.

'There is no ſituation in life,' cried Mrs. Atkinſon, 'which places us above 'the ſudden and unlooked-for changes of 'fortune, nor does indiſcretion always 'turn the wheel againſt us. Providence 'affords, with a bounteous hand, her 'bleſſings to mankind; but it is not her

'province

'province to give wantonly, or to load us
'with riches; pleaſed to ſhew her love
'when the tear of neceſſity is ſhed, ſhe
'haſtens with aſſiſtance, but ſmiles with
'contempt on the wretch who aſks her
'aid to heap up wealth or ſupport extra-
'vagance. My hiſtory will be a ſtriking
'inſtance of the uncertainty of human
'happineſs; educated in all the ideas of
'affluence and rank, my mind would have
'been ill ſuited to have borne the changes
'I have experienced, had not the vani-
'ties of youth been corrected by the mo-
'ral leſſons and good example of one of
'the beſt of women.

'I found myſelf as far back as I can
'recollect in a ſplendid houſe in Groſve-
'nor ſquare, belonging to Lord Stretton,
'attended by my ſervants, and treated
'with the greateſt tenderneſs and care; I
'was, however, taught to know, when

'very young, by the amiable miſtreſs of 'that manſion, that, on the progreſs I 'ſhould make in my education, and on 'my good behaviour, would depend all 'my good fortune in life. I confeſs to 'you, I did not, at that time, under-'ſtand what ſhe meant ſufficiently for 'it to make me uneaſy; and, indeed, 'I conſidered, ſuch converſations merely 'intended to make me proſecute my ſtu-'dies with vigour and aſſiduity; but as I 'acquired more diſcernment, I began to 'perceive a certain myſtery and darkneſs 'in every thing which related to myſelf, 'that I could by no means account for. 'It was natural, when Lady Stretton in-'formed me ſhe was not my real mother, 'to aſk who were my parents, which queſ-'tion ſhe always avoided, any other, than 'by ſaying, ſhe believed they were dead: 'however, as I grew up my inquiries be-'came more frequent, and better directed

'for

'for information, to which I was urged by 'ſome of my young play-fellows, who, 'very curiouſly, inquired who I was; all 'the information I could give them, how-'ever, amounted to no more than this, 'that my name was Somervile. Young 'as I was, I could not help feeling a little 'chagrin at the unneceſſary myſtery, 'which, I thought, was kept up reſpect-'ing my family; but my ſituation was 'too agreeable to let me be long unhap-'py about it: the human mind is not 'fond of being taken from its preſent 'enjoyment; curioſity would only have 'made me more wretched, and, perhaps, 'the gratification of it ſtill more ſo; thus 'it was, the ſecret remained in the breaſt 'of Lady Stretton, ſeldom aſked for, nor 'often thought of on my part.—Soon, 'however, a trifling circumſtance renew-'ed the ſubject in my tender mind; we 'were viſited in town by a clergyman,

'whoſe goodneſs of heart and benevo-
'lence of mind had made him beloved
'and reſpected by all ranks of people,
'from the peer, who viſited him, as a
'man of learning and virtue, to the cot-
'tager, who bleſſed him for his hoſpita-
'lity and charitableneſs of mind. This
'gentleman, one day, in converſation
'with Lady Stretton, expreſſed his
'thoughts about me, in a manner I ſhall
'never be able to forget, as his inquiries
'produced a very extraordinary embar-
'raſſment on her part.'—'I think, my
'Lady,' ſaid he, 'you have often told me,
'this dear good girl is not a relation of
'your's; I fear you will ſpoil her, by
'bringing her up in a ſtile not ſuited to
'her ſituation; ſhould any thing happen
'to you, what a change will ſhe feel;
'humbleneſs is the beſt ſecurity againſt
'the inconſtancy of fortune; beſides, why
'not inform her, of who her parents
'were?'

'were?'—'Becauſe, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'I, 'myſelf, am uninformed; ſhe may, per-'haps, one day or other, have to ſupport 'a rank as high as my own; but, pray, let 'us drop this ſubject."---'I beg pardon, 'Madam,' ſaid he, 'and am ſorry I en-'tered on it, ſince it ſeems to give you 'pain.'-----'After this, they continued 'ſilent, and I have never ſince heard any 'converſation that related to myſelf, re-'ſpecting my birth and family; thus I 'loſt the only chance I ever had of being 'made in the leaſt acquainted with thoſe 'particulars. As for Lord Stretton, he 'had left England when I was only ten 'years old, ſo that I hardly remembered 'his perſon at all: the ſervants, however, 'I believe, conjectured, that I was a na-'tural child of his, though the remark-'able words Lady Stretton made uſe of 'to Doctor Willock, certainly made 'againſt that idea.

'I was about ſixteen when we left 'town, to enjoy the pleaſures of retire-'ment, at a little cottage near Windſor, 'where we remained near three years; 'it was at that delightful ſpot that I had 'an opportunity to indulge my paſſion 'for muſic, poetry, and painting, and to 'admire the works of nature; the hours 'paſſed away in a ſort of uninterrupted 'felicity. My mornings were ſpent in 'walking and in my neceſſary ſtudies, 'and my afternoons employed in reading 'my favourite authors, Sterne, Shen-'ſtone, and Thomſon; my peaceful heart 'beat only with an exceſs of ſenſibility, 'raiſed from poetic fiction. I had as yet 'known no real ſorrow, nor was my 'mind tainted with vice: my adoration 'and love towards the Almighty were pure 'and unalloyed with temporal ideas. The 'worthy clergyman, I have mentioned, 'was the kindeſt friend I had while at

'Windſor,

'Windſor, and continued his regard for 'me till he went with a young nobleman 'to the continent.

'Such was the happineſs I enjoyed, 'when it pleaſed Heaven to try my heart 'with viciſſitude; Lord Stretton ſtill con-'tinued abroad, and as I could learn, was 'likely never to return, as he had ſepa-'rated from his lady, without aſſigning 'any cauſe, or even having the leaſt diſ-'agreement; beſides which, it was ſaid, 'his mind was in a ſtate of derangement, 'ſo that I had only to depend on the 'goodneſs of his lady for ſupport---the 'blow was as unexpected and ſudden, as 'it was ſevere: my dear benefactreſs, 'who had paſſed the evening at a lady's 'houſe near Windſor, was brought home 'dead---ſhe had taken her leave, as I was 'informed, of the company in apparent 'good health and ſpirits, till the ſervant

'who

'who opened the coach-door for her to 'alight, found her as he thought aſleep— 'good Heavens! ſhe was no more.— 'Thus, Mr. Woodcock, ended the life of 'the amiable Lady Stretton, and with 'it, all the pleaſures I had for ſo long a 'time uninterruptedly enjoyed. I now 'found myſelf unprotected in the world. 'I had entertained hopes, that my pa- 'troneſs would one day or other have 'diſcloſed to me, the particulars of my 'birth: in this I was diſappointed, and 'left involved in a myſtery, which to this 'day has never been developed. My 'ſituation was now wretched, indeed---- 'no will was to be found, and I began 'already to taſte of neglect, and to ſuf- 'fer the dreadful anticipation of ap- 'proaching difficulties. Our charming 'little villa was put in the hands of a 'ſteward of the Earl of Cheſterton, her 'Ladyſhip's brother, who treated me

'with

'with a vaſt deal of politeneſs, till he 'was informed, that I was not a relation 'of Lady Stretton's, when he began to 'uſe towards me that ſupercilious behavi-'our, with which the low and debaſed 'mind ever treats the unfortunate. I 'hardly knew in this ſituation how to 'act---I had formed only one friendſhip, 'and that was with a young lady of the 'name of Laſcelles, too young and 'thoughtleſs to aſſiſt me with advice; my 'own age only exceeded eighteen by a 'few months, and I was quite unac-'quainted with the ways of the world 'and buſineſs.

'At laſt, however, I determined on 'going to London, to an old ſervant of 'Lady Stretton's, who I knew to be a 'plain and friendly woman: I ſoon pack-'ed up my little trifles, and then with 'an aching heart bid adieu to Windſor,

'with

'with no other remembrance of my dear 'benefactreſs, than a ring which ſhe gave 'when I was very young.---As ſoon as I 'had arrived in town, and my agitation 'of mind was a little over, I waited upon 'Lady Hyndes, who was an intimate ac-'quaintance of the deceaſed Lady Stret-'ton's: ſhe was dreſſing when I was in-'troduced;'—'Lord! child,' was the 'words with which ſhe addreſſed me at 'my entrance, 'what brought you here?'— 'Madam,' ſaid I, 'you have, no doubt, 'heard of my dear Lady's death!'—'Yes 'child, Lord how ſhocking! Has ſhe 'left any will?'---'No, my Lady,' ſaid I.--- 'No will!'---'No Madam,' replied I, 'the 'houſe is taken poſſeſſion of by ſtrangers. '----I have taken the liberty to wait on 'your Ladyſhip to aſk your advice what 'I had beſt do.'---'My advice! Lord 'child! I don't underſtand law-matters,' 'returned Lady Hyndes, 'beſides, I didn't

'know

'know you was related in the leaſt to 'Lady Stretton.'—I felt at this moment, 'for the firſt time, the pang which a 'haughty and contemptuous manner oc-'caſions in a breaſt unuſed to reproach, 'and nearly ſunk on the ſofa.' 'No, 'Madam,' ſaid I, 'I am not at all re-'lated to Lady Stretton, nor have I any 'claim except on the humanity of her re-'lations. At this Lady Hyndes affected 'a ſtare, and uttered not a ſyllable for 'ſome minutes; at laſt ſhe broke out;'--- 'Well, child, and what do you want 'me to do?----'I was only deſirous,' an-'ſwered I, 'of your Ladyſhip's advice!' 'My advice!' returned ſhe---'Lord! I 'don't ſee how you can act I'm ſure, 'unleſs you get a Lady's maid's place, 'or ſomething of that ſort.'----'I ſhall 'be ſatisfied, Madam,' (returned I, with 'more indignation than I ever felt in my 'life), 'in any ſituation, however hum-

'ble,

'ble, that can ſecure me from pride and 'inſult.'---At this inſtant, the deafening 'clamour of the knocker announced a 'faſhionable viſitor.—Lady Moulton was 'introduced, when I received my diſmiſ-'ſion in the following words, as nearly as 'I can recollect: Well, I don't know 'what to ſay to you I'm ſure; you know 'you are not a relation of Lady Stret-'ton's, and her friends are not obliged 'to provide for you; and as for his 'Lordſhip he's abroad, and the people 'ſay out of his mind.'----'I have ſaid, 'already, Madam,' anſwered I, 'that I 'have no claim whatever, nor have I 'waited on your Ladyſhip from any other 'motive, than to aſk you to direct an 'unfortunate girl, who has loſt in one 'hour the beſt of friends, and who has 'not another in the world.---The tears 'fell ſo faſt at this moment, that I was 'obliged to hold my handkerchief to my

'eyes.

'eyes. The Lady who had entered the 'room, and who, I thought, I had ſeen 'before, was a tall fine-made woman; 'her face was expreſſive of a ſweet and 'gentle diſpoſition, and her manners were 'the moſt engaging and polite---' Why 'ſhould I,' cried this amiable woman, 'ſend away this young Lady, ſhe ſeems 'to have buſineſs of conſequence.'—— 'Oh, Lord! nothing at all my dear,' 'cried Lady Hyndes-----' you may go 'young woman.' I made a low curtſey 'to this *Lady of faſhion*, and was retiring 'to the door, when Lady Moulton caught 'hold of my hand, 'I inſiſt upon it, my 'dear,' cried ſhe, 'that you don't go;' 'this young Lady, (addreſſing herſelf to 'Lady Hyndes), is an old acquaintance 'of mine; I recollect now having ſeen 'her very often at poor Lady Stretton's 'houſe, give me leave to introduce her 'to your notice: come, my dear,' con-

'tinued

'tinued ſhe, 'come, we will endeavour 'to conſole you for the loſs of ſo amia-'ble a friend---ſit down with me on the 'ſofa.'---'I obeyed very reluctantly, tho' 'Lady Hyndes ſeconded the invitation, 'with a ſlight inclination of the head, and 'a motion of her right hand, which was 'laid on the arm of a fauteuil. Some 'converſation enſued about my deceaſed 'benefactreſs, in which Lady Hyndes only 'acted, what may be called, the faſhion-'able part, that is, ſhe heard every cir-'cumſtance with the utmoſt indifference, 'and at laſt turned the converſation to a 'more favorite ſubject: 'Pray, my dear,' 'cried ſhe to Lady Moulton, (juſt after 'I had finiſhed the affecting ſtory of Lady 'Stretton's death), 'do you go the Opera 'to-night; I think I ſhall be there; 'there is a new play at the Haymarket, 'and you know I hate new plays.'---'I 'won't promiſe,' cried Lady Moulton, 'but

'but a propos---I have to aſk you to 'ſubſcribe to the works of a young 'author, who is a great favourite of 'mine, may we put your name down?'--- 'What is the work?' cried Lady Hyndes; '---A Poem, I believe, my dear.'---'A 'Poem! well, it's all the ſame to me, 'for I ſhall never read it---how much 'does the man want?' 'The ſubſcrip-'tion' returned Lady Moulton, 'is half-'a-guinea; he is a very worthy young 'man and very poor.' 'Poor author 'man!' cried Lady Hyndes laughing, 'and what's his name'---'Atkinſon:'--- 'Atkinſon!'---'Hum; well there's half-'a-guinea for him:' 'I could not for the 'life of me, diſcover in my own mind a 'cauſe for the extraordinary generoſity of 'Lady Hyndes on this occaſion, till I re-'collected, that the pride and vanity 'which are uppermoſt in the minds 'of many of thoſe who call themſelves per-

'perſons of rank, ſometimes directs 'them to actions to which their hearts 'are utter ſtrangers. Another thing 'which puzzled me, was the intimate 'terms on which Lady Hyndes and 'the deceaſed Lady Stretton were in 'her life-time; but the unſeeming and 'haughter demeanour of theſe people are 'not ſhewn to each other—it is the poor 'dependent only, who is acquainted with 'the arrogance of faſhion.

'After a little unintereſting converſa-'tion, Lady Moulton roſe to take her 'leave, and very politely aſked me, if 'ſhe could ſet me down in her way to 'Piccadilly: I determined within myſelf 'immediately, not to reject this offer, as 'it appeared likely to make me better 'acquainted with a lady, of whoſe diſ-'poſition I already entertained the high-'eſt opinion.----I thought I could read a

'great

'great deal of chagrin in the counte-
'nance of Lady Hyndes at this moment,
'but it was impoſſible for her to prevent
'the polite invitation Lady Moulton
'gave me,' who repeated, 'Come, my
'dear, the coach is ready.'---'We were
'no ſooner ſeated in the carriage, than
'Lady Moulton began making inquiries
'after my health and ſituation in ſo kind
'and tender a manner, that I found my-
'ſelf obliged to be unreſerved---my tears
'followed every expreſſion of friendſhip,
'and I felt more overcome than by all
'the haughtineſs and incivility Lady
'Hyndes ſhewed me.'----'My dear,'
cried Lady Moulton, 'I muſt not allow
'you to be ſo low-ſpirited; I know very
'well what you muſt feel for the loſs of
'ſo kind a friend as Lady Stretton was to
'you; but I am ſure, under her inſtruc-
'tions, you received an education which
'has directed you where to look for re-
'lief

'lief in the moment of neceſſity; you 'muſt not hope for conſolation from the 'thoughtleſs and gay; can you expect 'your grief to penetrate minds which are 'inſenſible to their own happineſs?---I 'am ſhocked at the behaviour of Lady 'Hyndes, and no doubt you will won-'der why perſons of rank, whoſe prin-'ciples are very different, ſhould keep 'company with a woman of ſo little 'worth; but in that, we are, perhaps, 'the moſt unfortunate people in the 'world----we require all the attentions 'exterior politeneſs can give from each 'other, unleſs a general cenſure ſhuts us 'out from that diſtinction; but it muſt 'be a very great and notorious crime 'that is thus puniſhed---Lady Hyndes, 'though exceſſively vain, and the ſlave 'of almoſt every folly by turns, has a 'high character for wit and taſte: ſhe 'may be ſaid to decide on polite lite-

'rature, the faſhions, and even politics---
'it is for theſe acquiſitions ſhe is court-
'ed, though, in my opinion, very unjuſt-
'ly---Modeſt merit and real genius ſel-
'dom meet with any thing elſe than ridi-
'cule from her, while all the wretched
'buffoonery and ſtage trick of the thea-
'tre has her applauſe and ſupport. I
'heard her opinion given once on a new
'performance, which ſhe condemned,
'though it contained a beautiful moral
'leſſon, ſentiment, plot, and character.'
'---Lord! it's ſhocking dull,' cried Lady
'Hyndes, 'we go to the play to laugh
'and not to cry; they might cut out
'four acts at leaſt.'---'She is, however,
'acquainted with the Managers of the
'theatres, and intimate with ſeveral of
'the beſt critics of the age, who ſubſcribe
'to her opinion in every thing, as they
'find it their intereſt, if not to get her
'approbation, at leaſt to keep her quiet.'

'---Such was the character Lady Moulton 'gave me of the *woman of quality* we had 'left: you may eaſily imagine, I could 'be no longer ſurpriſed at the reception 'I had received from a woman, whoſe 'vanity directed her not to aſſiſt the diſ-'treſſed, but to patronize thoſe only who 'could return ſervile public adulation for 'the favours ſhe beſtowed. After Lady 'Moulton had concluded her biographi-'cal ſketch, ſhe renewed her aſſurances 'of friendſhip to me, with additional 'warmth, and made me the offer of her 'houſe till I could ſettle my affairs; be-'ſides promiſing to intereſt Lord Moul-'ton on the ſubject, as he was acquaint-'ed with the Earl of Cheſterton. The 'generous interference of a high charac-'ter in our favour, not only turns the 'ſcale of fortune, but affords at the mo-'ment, the moſt grateful of all ſenſations 'to the mind: it is, however, dangerous

'to

'to our peace----new cares are formed
'when our hopes are flattered, and new
'fears arise.

'We were now set down at a very
'handsome house in Piccadilly, when
'Lady Moulton insisted on my alighting
'and staying with her to dinner; his
'Lordship was from home, and she ex-
'pected Mr. Atkinson, the author, she
'had recommended to Lady Hyndes,
'who, she told me, was a young man of
'very excellent character and abilities.---
'A piano-forte was in the drawing-room;
'Lady Moulton requested me to play an
'air, which I did; when she expressed
'herself highly delighted at the skill she
'was pleased to say, I shewed in the ex-
'ecution. The conversation now turned
'upon our expected visitor, when she put
'into my hands some plaintive verses,
'supposed to be wrote on the banks of

'the Arrow, a delightful river in War-
'wickſhire. I will candidly confeſs, that
'it was from this little piece of poetry,
'that I firſt felt the paſſion of love.'

Mrs. Atkinſon, at this moment, broke off from her hiſtory, to ſhew me the lines ſhe had mentioned, which ſhe took from her pocket-book---The words were as follows :---

I.

In murmurs gentle Arrow flow,
While I recall each piercing woe,
And all my pleaſures paſt:
Then ſhall the painful thought ariſe,
Of all I love, of all I prize,
Of joys that could not laſt.

II.

Ye ſportive tribes in ſafety play,
My bait no longer lures the way,
My rod is laid aſide;

For

For thy tormentor ſoon ſhall feel
The pang which pity cannot heal,
To level all his pride.

III.

Ah! why did Ethelinda ſmile,
Or why did hope the days beguile,
In pleaſures ſweetly ſpent:
To let oppreſſion's cruel hand,
Deſtroy the lovers' tender band,
And rob me of content?

IV.

Yet to adverſe fate reſign'd,
Serenity ſhall charm my mind,
And all my ſighs approve;
While, as along thy banks I ſtray,
I ſing in melancholy lay,
The pangs of hopeleſs love.

V.

Till when my body ſhall be ſeen,
On thy ſweet banks of mantled green,
May ſome rude ſwain remove

My hapleſs corſe, to ſhelter nigh,
Whoſe honeſt tears ſhall rites ſupply,
And ſay:---He died for love.

Mrs. Atkinſon then continued her hiſtory as follows:——'Well,' cried Lady 'Moulton,' 'what do you think of Mr. 'Atkinſon's abilities?'---'I anſwered with 'a bluſh, but was pleaſed to find ſhe her-'ſelf approved them.

'Nothing can be more gratifying than 'to find among people of ſuperior rank, 'ſuperior minds: Lady Moulton might 'juſtly claim that diſtinction; ſhe had 'both genius and taſte, with that gene-'rous liberality of judgment which is not 'afraid to decide in the favour of merit, 'againſt the falſe opinion of the town, 'which, as it is frequently prejudiced and 'venal, ſcarce deſerves attention from 'the fair and candid reader:----Lady 'Hyndes

'Hyndes was the very oppoſite charac-
'ter; inſenſible to every thing alike, ſhe
'judges without peruſing any more than
'the title-page of a book, and con-
'demns a play without hearing any
'more than the laſt act---and that ſhe
'may poſſeſs the power ſhe is ſo fond of,
'a nod, a loud laugh, or a low titter,
'ſerves her purpoſe as effectually, as
'giving the town a whole ſheet of cri-
'ticiſm: involved in diſſipation, pride,
'and folly, ſhe only ſlightly reviews the
'works that come before her, and either
'ridicules or forgets them:---deſtitute
'of humanity, ſhe frequently permits a
'brilliancy of imagination, diſcountenance
'the moſt real worth, and ſports for her
'amuſement with the feelings of the un-
'happy wretch, whoſe good fame de-
'pends upon her ſentence.

I could not help interrupting Mrs. Atkinſon at this part of her hiſtory.---'Is it poſſible,' ſaid I, 'that ſuch a woman 'ſhould govern the taſte of thoſe whoſe 'education and rank in life gives them 'the ability and power of judging for 'themſelves.'

'There are but few (continued Mrs. 'Atkinſon) not tainted with the poiſon that 'is once ſpread by a conſpicuous and 'faſhionable character; their very vices 'and abſurdities are followed; the moſt 'wretched depravity can hardly make 'them contemptible; while the indiſ-'cretion of an amiable girl would be the 'ſubject of their cenſure, and ſhut her 'out from their ſociety.---If a woman of 'faſhion preſerves but her honor, no 'matter how near ſhe comes to that 'point; and for any thing elſe, ſhe may 'be as proud, as vain, as envious, and

'as

'as ill-natured as ſhe pleaſes—ſhould you 'ever have occaſion to be amongſt them, 'you will find I have given a juſt idea of 'faſhion.'

'Heaven preſerve me then,' ſaid I, 'from having any thing to do with them; 'the moſt humble lot is ſuperior to a 'dependence on the caprice of ſuch 'beings.'

'You are right, (cried Mrs. Atkinſon) 'it is very ſeldom that their patronage 'beſtows happineſs on the dependent:— 'the ſacrifices they require for what they 'do, are ungrateful to the feelings, and 'diſgraceful to humanity: a long and 'ſervile attendance may ſometimes ob- 'tain you your wiſhes—after a waſte of 'time and frequent diſappointments, and 'then, perhaps, you owe your ſucceſs to 'the whim of a moment, for the heart

'has little to do in their actions:—but 'it will more frequently happen, that 'you loſe the fruit for which you have 'ſo long and induſtriouſly laboured. The 'promiſes of the great are words of 'courſe, which flatter the dependent as 'long as he is willing to bear the illu-'ſion.—Heaven forbid! (cried Mrs. At-'kinſon) that I ſhould attack the great 'with indiſcriminate cenſure, for there 'are many among them poſſeſſed of good 'and valuable hearts, and whoſe virtues 'adorn the rank and title they bear—— 'How muſt it add to the pleaſures of the 'rich to be beloved? The hoſpitable 'ſeat of ſome Engliſh nobleman comes 'to my mind, where the ſeaſons of feſti-'vity are ſtill kept up, and the Chriſt-'mas ox laid down to roaſt; inſtead of 'a vile, wretched, and debauched life, the 'ſmiles of a healthy offspring bleſs his 'days, and the good wiſhes of the vil-

'lager

'lager reward his bounty with ſelf-ſatis-
'faction; a pleaſure rarely felt by the
'great---How much of happineſs does
'affluence loſe by pride and extrava-
'gance---and how bright is the luſtre of
'the coronet adorned with humanity!---
'But (cried Mrs. Atkinſon) I fear, I am
'getting too poetical; you will, how-
'ver, admit with me, that ſuch a cha-
'racter as Lady Hyndes deſerves the
'keeneſt ſatire ever uſed, to expoſe de-
'fect, and arraign vice and folly---if
'ſuch a woman gives, it is pride that
'makes the grant; if ſhe pretends to
'pity, affectation ſheds the tear; if ſhe
'fancies ſhe loves, it is the romance of
'an hour; and if ſhe is ever reaſonable,
'it is after loſing at pharo or quadrille.

'Lady Moulton was the moſt amiable
'woman of rank I had ever known, and
'even had more gentleneſs of manner

'and delicacy, than my dear benefactress.
'I had not been long with her in the
'drawing-room, before her children were
'brought in, the beautiful little emblems
'of their mother's virtues; they were
'sensible, pretty, polite, and full of af-
'fection and duty.----I had an opportu-
'nity during this happy moment of do-
'mestic quiet, to pour forth my whole
'heart to the amiable Lady Moulton,
'who listened to me with the utmost at-
'tention and concern---the greatest diffi-
'culty in interesting a person of fashion
'in our affairs lies in calling home their
'feelings, which are generally engaged in
'novelty and pleasure; Lady Moulton
'was not so volatile, she attended to me
'and felt. We were disturbed at last, in
'our conversation, by a servant entering
'to say, that his Lordship was returned
'home to dress; upon which Lady
'Moulton made her apologies, and left

'me

'me ſome minutes, which time was ſuf-
'ficiently employed in thinking on the
'incidents of the day.---Lady Moulton
'was not long before ſhe returned, and
'entered the room with a ſmile on her
'countenance.'---'Well, my dear,' ſaid
'ſhe, 'I have been ſpeaking to Lord
'Moulton about you; and he has pro-
'miſed me, that he will ſee the Earl of
'Cheſterton---and I hope, my dear, he
'will bring that nobleman, who is very
'rich, to give you a genteel allowance---
'You muſt, however, keep up your
'ſpirits, and ſtay with us till all is ſettled.'
'I hardly ever felt more grateful than I
'did at this moment; nor did I neglect
'to breathe a prayer of thankſgiving to
'that Being, who diſpoſes events in our
'favour, for this inſtance of his Provi-
'dence.

'Dinner

'Dinner was near upon being brought 'up, when Mr. Atkinſon was announced; 'his figure was very different then, from 'what it is now; he had a fine colour in 'his face, and though tall and thin, ap- 'peared in good health.---The ſubject of 'our converſation at dinner was polite 'literature, on which Mr. Atkinſon diſ- 'courſed with judgment and candour, 'when our patroneſs (for ſo I muſt now 'call her) endeavoured to enliven the 'ſubject by many little anecdotes and bon 'mots; a trait of vivacity was viſible in 'Mr. Atkinſon's face; but I obſerved, 'with pain, that it was conſtantly checked 'by ſome melancholy thoughts uppermoſt 'in his mind.

'Lord Moulton came in while we were 'at dinner; and, after making an apology, 'ſtood by the fire-ſide, and joined our 'converſation; he was a middle-ſized 'man,

'man, finely made, and every action 'was governed by the moſt graceful de-'portment; his face was intelligent, and 'his eyebrows ſomewhat contracted into 'a frown, which ſeemed the effect of a 'piercing judgment, and not ill-humour, 'for he was good-natured and com-'plaiſant to every body, even to his 'domeſtics;---his Lordſhip paid me many 'very particular attentions, and told me, 'that he ſhould make it his buſineſs to 'ſee the Earl of Cheſterton that week; 'but before that time,' ſaid he, 'you and 'I muſt have a little converſation toge-'ther, that I may be prepared with what 'I am to ſay.' 'My dear, (continued 'his Lordſhip to Lady Moulton) 'you 'will take care to amuſe Miſs Somer-'ville as much as you can till I return, 'when we will talk over her buſineſs.'— 'I felt highly flattered with this beha-'viour; there is, ſurely, nothing more

'pleaſing

'pleaſing than to find ourſelves the object
'of an attention that might be withheld.
'---Lord Moulton now directed his con-
'verſation to Mr. Atkinſon, and inquired
'after the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription, in
'which he ſeemed to intereſt himſelf very
'much; I could not help feeling a great
'deal of pain for my young author, when
'I heard him expreſs his fears that it
'would not anſwer;' 'I am indebt-
'ed, (ſaid Mr. Atkinſon) to Lady Moul-
'ton, for all the ſubſcribers I have ob-
'tained, and ſhe has been good enough
'to procure me Lady Hyndes' name
'among the reſt. 'A very valuable ac-
'quiſition, I am ſure, (returned his
'Lordſhip) 'your ſucceſs in the literary
'world will be certain, if you can engage
'her in your intereſt, though I would not
'have you truſt to her promiſes; ſhe is
'ſurrounded by a ſet of people who
'flatter her vanity, and approve her

'under-

'underſtanding; real merit is ſeldom ſo 'fortunate as to have her approbation. 'The judgment of the town is made, at 'this time, ſubſervient to a falſe and ridi-'culous taſte; comedy has reſigned her 'place to broad farce and mummery, and 'character, plot, and ſentiment are re-'jected for ſpectacle and pantomime; 'Lady Hyndes takes care to keep up a 'rage, which is ſo agreeable to her diſpo-'ſition, and converſant to her underſtand-'ing.'---'It appears to me, (continued 'his Lordſhip) 'that every body, at this 'time, affects to be judges, the conſe-'quence is, that the dulleſt blockhead 'takes upon him to decide on the works of 'genius; for it is very frequently the caſe, 'that the critic does not poſſeſs one half 'of the abilities of the man whoſe works 'he condemns.'—'Such were the ſenti-'ments Lord Moulton expreſſed on the

'ſubject

'ſubject of literature, which I liſtened to 'with much ſatisfaction, as the opinion 'of ſuch a man muſt be of ſervice to any 'ſide he took;—his Lordſhip, who was 'engaged to dine with the Spaniſh Am-'baſſador, now took his leave, and left 'us to continue the converſation. I do 'not remember ever having paſt an after-'noon more agreeable than with my new 'benefactreſs, who diſpenſed with all the 'pride of ſituation to indulge the freedom 'of chat; to add to her attentions, ſhe 'ſent a ſervant to the perſon's lodging, 'where my trunk was left, to remove it 'to her own houſe, and inſiſted on my 'ſleeping in Piccadilly that night.

'I could not help making ſome reflec-'tions, when I was retiring to my bed, 'on the incidents I had met with in ſuch 'a few hours, and conſidering how near 'diſappointment and ſucceſs were placed

'to

'to each other; the ſmalleſt circumſtance 'in the hands of Providence, can do 'more for us than the beſt plan we can 'form or imagine for ourſelves; our very 'croſſes and vexations are ſometimes the 'keys to future ſucceſs and good fortune, 'had Lady Hyndes received me with po-'liteneſs, which ſhe might, perhaps, in 'ſome one of her humours, have done, 'without any ſincerity: I ſhould have been 'ſatisfied, nor would Lady Moulton have 'been intereſted in my favour; thus it 'is, that every incident of human life is 'made ſubſervient to an All-directing 'Providence. Theſe thoughts were ſuc-'ceeded by others, which preſented Mr. 'Atkinſon to my mind in the moſt fa-'vourable light. I had already begun to 'contemplate his manner and addreſs, 'and almoſt ſhed tears when I recollected 'the melancholy with which he ſeemed 'oppreſſed; ſome little poetical produc-

'tions

'tions that he had ſhewn us, made a ſtill 'greater impreſſion, and I found it was 'impoſſible for me to reſiſt being intereſt-'ed in the favour of an author, who 'could ſo well deſcribe the paſſions, and 'direct the heart to truth and virtue; 'thus, though my mind was a good deal 'agitated, it was diſturbed only with the 'moſt pleaſing ſubjects; it was natural 'for me to feel new hopes and expecta-'tions from the intereſt of my new friends, 'and I indulged them,—how far I was 'miſtaken, (cried Mrs. Atkinſon) you 'ſhall, as it is now too late, hear at ano-'ther opportunity.'

Mr. Atkinſon returned to ſupper, which was more than we expected, and happened to be in ſuch good ſpirits, that his diſpoſition opened upon me to the greateſt advantage. I found him ſenſible and good-natured, with ſuch a large

large ſhare of claſſical learning, that I felt myſelf very inferior in that point; he, however, ſoon relieved me from my uneaſineſs, by entering on more general ſubjects, in which he was equally converſant.—I was ſo well entertained, that I did not return home till near twelve o'clock, when I retired to bed, very much pleaſed with my viſit, and determined, in my own mind, to renew it as ſoon as poſſible.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

I begin to think myſelf a gentleman,—forget the advice of Sally Beeſom—am ſent to Chelſea on buſineſs, the character of Mr. Flint laid open, with the continuation of Mrs. Atkinſon's Hiſtory, in which the wheel of fortune makes ſeveral Revolutions.

I HAD now been with Mr. Flint ſix months, and began to find my ſituation ſo eaſy and pleaſant, that I had almoſt forgot all the advice my friend Sally had given me; indeed, I had ſuch a deſire to be a gentleman, that my conſcientious ſcruples were removed very faſt; I now dreſt very fine, frequented the play-houſe, walked in the park on Sundays,

and did like other attorney's clerks, and was almoſt mean enough to ſhun my old acquaintance, David. My heart, however, ſometimes accuſed me; I thought on my innocent pleaſant walks in the country, the kitchen fire-ſide, which I ſeldom viſited, and my flute, which lay, neglected, in the deſk—but the diſſipations I entered into, ſoon did away ſuch childiſh reflections; I had only in the day-time to attend minutely to the commands of my employer, who was ready to indulge me in any folly, ſo as I made his clients pay for it, and ſeconded his views when he required it; Heaven was, however, too good to me, to let me be loſt; a circumſtance ſoon happened that brought me to my ſenſes. Mr. Flint, who had been contending the point againſt an old client, required me to make an affidavit on his ſide, which muſt have gained his wiſhes. I ſhuddered at the paper which I read,

I read, when I found it extended much beyond the facts, and that it was intended to make me the inſtrument of his villany. I had prudence enough to conceal my indignation till the time when I was to ſwear it, which I was reſolved never to do; fortunately the buſineſs dropt, and my mind was relieved from the weight that oppreſſed it;--another circumſtance, however, ſoon happened, which renewed all my former diſlike to my ſituation. I had been diſpatched one morning to Chelſea, on ſome buſineſs, when, as I was returning home through the park, I met Mr. Atkinſon, who addreſſed me very politely, and we entered into converſation together; among other things I was relating to him the change I had met with, in Mr. Flint, and the many flattering expectations I had to look to. 'I ſhould be very 'ready,' cried Mr. Atkinſon, 'to con-'gratulate you on your good fortune,

'were

'were I not acquainted with the man you 'have to do with. I am certain, (cried 'he) of being ſafe in expreſſing theſe ſenti-'ments to you, particularly, as it is for 'your happineſs that I am unreſerved.'--- 'Indeed, Sir, (ſaid I) I have much too 'contemptible an opinion of Mr. Flint, 'to be hurt at any thing you may ſay, 'and I hope, notwithſtanding my ſitua-'tion, that I have too high a ſenſe of ho-'nour ever to mention it again; pray, 'then, favour me with a hiſtory which I 'have ſo often wiſhed to hear.'---'Mr. 'Flint, then, (cried he) was born in 'London, and went firſt into an attor-'ney's office, in the *reſpectable* character 'of a ſhoe-boy. Nature had given him 'all the neceſſary qualifications for his pre-'ſent profeſſion, and to them he owed 'his riſe; he had genius and cunning, 'and was ſoon put to the deſk, where he 'preſently became, what is called, a good

'clerk; that is, he would go through
'thick and thin to ſerve the intereſts of
'his maſter: he is now very high in his
'profeſſion; too much practiſed in vil-
'lany to let conſcience interfere, and too
'regular in buſineſs to be interrupted by
'humanity, he was ſure of ſucceſs; he
'has acquired, from a great many, the
'name of a man of honour, upright,
'and juſt in all his dealings; to do him
'juſtice, he is ſcrupulouſly exact in pay-
'ing his debts, and when he once gave
'his word, was never known to forfeit it;
'unfortunately, however, for thoſe con-
'cerned with him, he has the art of
'amuſing them into his ſnares to perfec-
'tion, by his profeſſions of honour and
'liberality; I know, that ſhould I fail in
'my payments on the warrant of attorney,
'by a ſingle day, that I ſhould be treated
'with unrelenting cruelty; ingenious in
'miſchief, and cool in deſign, he bids
'defiance

'defiance to the cenſure of the judges,
'and ſtretches the law to its utmoſt ex-
'tent, yet this man has buſineſs. Thus
'it is that money gives a value to the
'baſeſt character, while the want of it
'ſinks into contempt the moſt honeſt and
'well-meaning mind;--the unpleaſant and
'bitter leſſons of adverſity have taught
'me, that though the world aſcribe
'a man's misfortunes to his own folly and
'indiſcretion, they ſeldom inquire into the
'cauſe of another's ſucceſs.—If we ſpeak
'of any one's being cruel and over-bear-
'ing, or an extortioner, the anſwer is,
'it may be ſo, he pays me very juſtly,
'and I have nothing to do with it; while,
'on the other hand, the more generous,
'but unfortunate man is ſubjected to illi-
'berality and miſconſtruction.—The doc-
'trine of *right*, ſo much ſpoken of in
'the world, is to the worthy mind, a
'rule to do all the good we can to
'our fellow-creatures, and no wrong; it

'directs us to do to each other as we 'would be done by; a leſſon given us 'from high authority, and that needs 'no expoſition but the heart.---In the 'bad man's hands the rule of right is a 'cruel and oppreſſive principle; it takes 'ſometimes the name of law, ſometimes 'of equity, ſometimes of juſtice; theſe 'are the engines with which they torture 'their fellow-creatures,---the name of '*right*' it is, that impriſons the unfortu-'nate debtor, whoſe only crime is ina-'bility. It is the word *right* by which 'power judges, and paſſes ſentence on 'its vaſſals,---it is the word *right* that 'makes the greater potentates of Europe 'divide among themſelves the territories 'of the leſſer; in ſhort, *right* is only 'another name for abſolute power.---No-'thing can be eaſier than to make a '*right*, it is a fiction ſet up to eaſe our 'conſciences and give us the liberty to 'act as we pleaſe; I have a *right*, ſays

'the

'the creditor, to ſeize the perſon of this 'man and confine him for ever, he is my 'debtor; I have a *right*, ſays the rich 'villain, to eject the lawful heir, becauſe 'a flaw in the teſtator's will gives me 'the power to do ſo; and I have a *right*, 'ſays the haughty noble, to tread on the 'corn of my tenant, becauſe he does not 'pay me ſufficient homage, and is too 'poor to contend with me. Theſe are the 'things, (cried Mr. Atkinſon) that check 'the exertions of induſtry, that ſow the 'ſeeds of diſcontent, and make a people 'wretched; it is not kings, it is not mini-'ſters of whom we have to complain, it is 'a general and ſhameful depravity.'--Such were the energetic words with which Mr. Atkinſon concluded his obſervations, by which I could eaſily perceive the independence of his principles.---I was perſuaded to accompany my friend to his houſe, as I knew very well, the buſineſs of

the day being nearly over, Mr. Flint would not be diſpleaſed at my abſence, unleſs he was acquainted with the real occaſion.—I had the pleaſure of dining with Mrs. Atkinſon, and, after dinner, her huſband being obliged to go out again on ſome buſineſs, ſhe favoured me with the remaining part of her hiſtory, which I was very impatient to hear.

THE CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF MRS. ATKINSON.

'Excuſe me, Mr. Woodcock, (cried 'Mrs. Atkinſon) if the recollection of 'my former happineſs ſhould, now and 'then, occaſion an involuntary ſigh; my 'heart is ſo low and dejected about Mr. 'Atkinſon's affairs, that you muſt not 'wonder if it beats with the recollection of 'misfortunes,

'misfortunes, not yet, I fear, entirely 'removed.—To continue my narrative, '(cried Mrs. Atkinſon) Lord Moulton 'very ſoon favoured me with an hour's 'converſation, and went the ſame morn-'ing to the Earl of Cheſterton, of whoſe 'friendſhip I did not entertain many 'hopes, as I never recollected ſeeing 'him at Windſor, and had often heard 'Lady Stretton ſay, he was a very haugh-'ty man; as I expected a diſappointment, 'it was not ſo ſevere as it would other-'wiſe have been. Lord Moulton return-'ed, and informed me he had ſeen the 'Earl, who received him very politely, 'but profeſſed himſelf utterly ignorant of 'my name and ſituation.'—'I am ſure, '(cried he) I am very ſorry for the poor 'girl, Lord Stretton ought certainly to 'provide for her, and, I dare ſay, if ever 'he returns to England he will.'---'It 'was impoſſible for me, (cried Lord

'Moulton) to urge his Lordſhip too far, 'particularly, as he ſaid, 'the young 'perſon could not poſſibly have any claim 'on him whatever,' which words diſguſt-'ed me ſo much that I could not renew the 'application.—Among people of faſhion, '(continued Lord Moulton) there is a 'certain rule of politeneſs, which will 'not permit the heart to appear; our be-'haviour to each other is governed by eti-'quette. I really will not deceive you, 'Miſs Somerville, with giving you any 'hopes of obtaining any thing from the 'Earl of Cheſterton; who, though rich 'and grand in his attendance and equi-'page, is the moſt ſordid of men. I aſ-'ſure you (continued Lord Moulton) I 'felt a great deal of indignation at his be-'haviour, but when we ſolicit, we muſt 'ſubmit to the inſult offered to our friend, 'when the ſmalleſt perſonal affront would 'be the ſubject of a duel. Indeed, I

'ſuppoſe,

'ſuppoſe, had any one of leſs rank than 'myſelf been your advocate, they would 'have not been attended to at all.'---'My 'Lord, (returned I) I thank you for the 'trouble you have had; I know I have 'no claim on the Earl of Cheſterton, nor 'ſhall I deſtroy my peace by an anxious 'dependence on his bounty; Lady Moul-'ton will, perhaps, be able to recom-'mend me to a place as lady's maid; I 'am too humble, and much too poor to 'be diſſatisfied with almoſt any ſituation.' 'Lord Moulton heard me with a great 'deal of evident concern,'--'Come, my 'dear Miſs Somerville, (cried he) don't 'be ſo unhappy, you muſt ſtay with us a 'while; I am ſure Lady Moulton will 'make every thing agreeable to you.'--- 'It was in this manner that I paſſed ſeve-'ral months, loaded with attentions and 'civilities from Lord and Lady Moulton; 'my acquaintance with Mr. Atkinſon

'had now increaſed from eſteem to love,
'and we both felt equally intereſted in
'all that concerned each other. Mr.
'Atkinſon was the ſon of a gentleman of
'ſmall fortune, whoſe pride occaſioned him
'to beſtow a claſſical education on his
'boy, and was at the expenſe of ſending
'him to the univerſity; however, when
'the old gentleman died, his eſtate, owing
'to the litigiouſneſs of his relations, went
'into chancery, where it has remained
'ever ſince. From that date Mr. Atkin-
'ſon began to be acquainted with adver-
'ſity, and as he had nothing but his abi-
'lities to depend upon, experienced all
'the difficulties a literary character is ſub-
'jected to; he had publiſhed ſeveral
'poems, and increaſed in reputation, but
'found his encouragement ſo diſpropor-
'tioned to his labour, that he almoſt gave
'up the idea of being an author, when,
'at laſt, fortune ſeemed to favour his en-

'deavours.

'deavours. Lord Moulton's chaplain, 'who was a friend of his father's, intro-'duced him to that nobleman, who took 'him by the hand, and uſed all his in-'tereſt to promote the ſucceſs of his 'works.

'About ſix months after I had been 'with Lady Moulton, ſhe gave me a 'letter which his Lordſhip had juſt re-'ceived from the Earl of Cheſterton re-'ſpecting myſelf: it contained the fol-'lowing extraordinary words:-----'In-'cloſed is a bill of fifty pounds for Miſs 'Somerville, which I muſt obſerve, is 'the only *donation* ſhe has to expect 'from me.'---I ſhould have immediately 'ſent the money back to that nobleman, 'had not Lady Moulton prevented me.' '---Come, my dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'it is more 'than we expected, and Lord Moulton 'and myſelf muſt try and make up the

'deficiency.'—'You may judge, Mr. 'Woodcock, how much gratitude I muſt 'have felt at this moment towards that 'worthy lady.

'My regard for Mr. Atkinſon had 'now become too plain not to be obſerved 'by Lady Moulton, who with great good 'humour rallied me on my love for the 'young author; but, however, as he had 'ſo precarious a dependence, adviſed me 'to wait till he had obtained a decree in 'his chancery-ſuit.---He had, however, 'obtained a *decree* in my heart, that 'made me regardleſs as to any other---- 'At laſt, hurried, by his ſolicitations, 'I conſented to his fixing a day for our 'marriage, after he ſhould have obtain- 'ed the approbation of Lord Moulton. 'That Nobleman, however, expreſſed 'his ſentiments on the ſame ſide with his 'lady; ſo that Mr. Atkinſon found it

'ne-

'neceſſary to drop the ſubject for that 'time.---While ſecure in each other's af-'fections, we paſſed many hours toge-'ther in an interchange of eſteem and 'friendſhip, the moſt agreeable in the 'world, and only alloyed on his ſide by his 'fears, and the uncertainty of his ſitua-'tion: circumſtances, however, ſoon fa-'voured the wiſhes of my lover, though 'the cauſe was an unpleaſant one. Lady 'Moulton was perſuaded to go to Mont-'pelier, for the benefit of her health, 'which ſeemed to have been on the de-'cline for ſome months back: in this 'excurſion, Lord Moulton intended to 'accompany her, and they were to make 'the tour of France and Italy before they 'returned to England. Theſe arrange-'ments were not long making, ſo that 'the moment of their departure ap-'proached very faſt, and I began to feel

'the

'the anticipation of regret. I was cer-
'tain, that had it not been for Mr. At-
'kinſon, ſhe would have taken me with
'her, and that ſhe ſuffered a good deal
'from reſigning me; though ſhe was
'too good to prevent my happineſs from
'ſelfiſh views.---'My dear girl,' ſaid ſhe
'to me on the morning ſhe ſet out for
'France, 'you do not know how much
'I love my dear Lucy, and the pain it
'occaſions in my breaſt to part with
'her; may you, however, be happy. I
'fear, I ſhall never return again, God
'bleſs you!'---'After ſhe had kiſſed me,
'with all the affection of a ſiſter, ſhe put
'a bank bill of an hundred pounds into
'my hand, gave me her conſent to marry
'Mr. Atkinſon, and bleſſed us both;
'ſuch was the manner of the ami-
'able Lady Moulton to a poor depend-
'ent.

'Lord

'Lord Moulton had been equally ge-
'nerous to Mr. Atkinſon, and preſented
'him with the like ſum, beſides a quan-
'tity of plate and furniture; nor had his
'lordſhip been neglectful in his endea-
'vours to procure him a place under go-
'vernment, but ſucceſs had not attended
'his applications.

'Soon after the departure of our
'friends, our marriage took place, and
'we retired to a ſweet rural village near
'town, where, if we had made a proper
'uſe of our little money, we might have
'been happy now. Speculation always
'involves the mind in ſolicitude; a great
'deal of time was loſt in plans and
'ſchemes to lay out our money to ad-
'vantage, and we daily found a ſenſible
'decreaſe of purſe: unfortunately about
'this time, Mr. James, Lord Moulton's
'ſoli-

'ſolicitor, who carried on the ſuit in 'chancery for Mr. Atkinſon, died; and 'we were recommended by an acquaint-'ance to Mr. Flint, who took the papers, 'and promiſed to bring the buſineſs to a 'concluſion as ſoon as poſſible. There 'never was any thing had more the ap-'pearance of friendſhip than the manner 'Mr. Flint uſed to myſelf and Mr. At-'kinſon: he introduced me to his daugh-'ter, invited us to his country-houſe, and 'expreſſed the warmeſt attachment to us 'both; by which arts, he engaged us to 'depoſit our little property in his hands, 'for the purpoſe of procuring my huſ-'band a place. Month after month elap-'ſed in the ſecurity we felt in his 'friendſhip, kept alive by expectation, 'and amuſed by falſhood: at laſt, how-'ever, it became neceſſary for us to in-'quire into the ſtate of our buſineſs in

'chan-

'chancery, for our finances were almoſt 'reduced to nothing. Mr. Flint told us 'repeatedly, not to be uneaſy, for that 'it went on *charmingly* (to uſe his own 'word) and that it would ſoon come to 'a hearing. Some months, however, 'elapſed, before Mr. Atkinſon called 'again, when he was informed by Mr. 'Flint, that we had all the buſineſs to 'do over again, as it was abſolutely ne-'ceſſary to make ſome other perſons 'parties to the bill: whether this was 'really was the caſe, Mr. Atkinſon was 'not able to decide:---he relied upon the 'friendſhip of Mr. Flint, and truſted to 'his honour.

'Some little time afterwards, Mr. Flint 'called upon us and told us, he had 'thought of a ſcheme very much to our 'advantage, and in which it would be in

'his

'his power to aſſiſt us. It was to fur-
'niſh a houſe in town very elegantly for
'ſingle gentlemen: Mr. Atkinſon readily
'embraced this propoſal, and his friend
'Mr. Flint was on his credit to procure
'the goods, for the amount of which we
'were to give him a bond and judgment.
'In ſhort, the houſe was taken, and a
'large quantity of furniture ſent in. It
'was in vain that Mr. Atkinſon ſolicited
'an account of Mr. Flint's expenditure
'in his ſuit, and a ſtatement of what re-
'mained in his hands: his anſwer was,
'that the buſineſs in chancery was not
'ended, and that if Mr. Atkinſon want-
'ed *five hundred pounds*, he ſhould have
'it. Things remained ſome time in this
'ſituation, till we found that our plan
'had been a very bad one, and that we
'were conſiderably in debt. It was im-
'poſſible for us to pay the bond when it
'be-

'became due, ſo that we were obliged to 'aſk Mr. Flint to let it ſtand over: this 'he did, but ſtill amuſed us from any 'ſettlement, and propoſed that his broker 'ſhould value the goods, and take ſuch 'as we had no occaſion for, which would 'in part diſcharge the bond. Mr. At-'kinſon had too much honour to reject 'this, and the furniture was valued at leſs 'than half what had been charged to us. 'Freſh writings were now entered into 'for the remainder of the money, and we 'found ourſelves more involved and de-'pendent every day.

'At laſt, tired out with ſo uncertain 'and unpleaſant a ſituation, and alarmed 'by the myſtery we began to diſcover in 'Flint's behaviour, beſides having heard 'ſome ſtories not much to his credit, we 'applied to him ſeveral times to come to 'a ſet-

'a ſettlement, till wearied out with ap-
'plications of this ſort, Mr. Atkinſon
'required an account in a manner his
'friend could no longer refuſe—But
'judge our aſtoniſhment, when we found
'ourſelves indebted to him in the amount
'of four hundred pounds, for his coſts in
'the chancery ſuit, and upon the bond!
'to make up this enormous ſum, every
'viſit was made an attendance, and every
'delay uſed to augment his demand.—
'Mr. Atkinſon, in a polite way, ven-
'tured to remonſtrate, and then the ſer-
'pent we had nouriſhed reared his head,
'and ſhewed the poiſonous rancour of his
'heart: he pleaded the trouble he had
'had; enlarged upon the favours he had
'done us; and to give a colour to his ex-
'tortion, ſaid, he did not even then want
'the money, and that if it would be of
'any ſervice to us, he would take ano-
'ther

'ther bond and judgment for the whole,
'and would go on with our buſineſs in
'chancery, out of his own pocket. As
'we knew not how to act, and were cer-
'tain, that we could employ no other
'attorney, without paying firſt Mr.
'Flint's bill, we conſented, and he now
'had our warrant of attorney for his enor-
'mous demand. A coolneſs, however,
'was from that day viſible on his ſide;
'nor did he ſhew any friendſhip to us a
'moment after he had got this ſecurity
'in his hands; for very ſoon afterwards
'he ſent in another bill, for my board
'and lodging, while on a viſit for a
'month to Miſs Flint at his country-
'houſe; and alſo a refuſal to proceed
'any further in our buſineſs without
'money. We now ſaw too late our
'error, and trembled at the power we
'had put into the hands of ſo bad a man;

'we

'we had no way to avoid his vengeance,
'the bonds he held, prevented our seek-
'ing relief from the law for the over-
'charges and unjuſt charges of his bill,
'while he could put Mr. Atkinſon in
'priſon for what was ſtrictly legal. The
'intimacy which had ſubſiſted between me
'and Miſs Flint was now at an end; and
'after an interval of anxious ſilence, Mr.
'Atkinſon was arreſted at the ſuit of Mr.
'Flint—that gentleman's friendſhip was,
'however, as great as *ever*, and would
'not let Mr. Atkinſon remain long in a
'lock-up houſe; ſo that he was releaſed
'on paying the coſts, and entering into
'freſh ſecurities, which added conſi-
'derably to the expenſes. Thus did this
'wretch lay us under freſh obligations,
'to put it out of our power to complain,
'and to entitle his actions to the name
'of lenity!---What has followed, Mr.
'Wood-

'Woodcock, you are acquainted with, 'except, that we have reduced the debt 'to one hundred pounds, through the 'friendſhip of Lady Moulton, who re- 'membered me to the laſt moment of 'her life, and often remitted ſums of 'money to us. But our ſituation is 'now more precarious than ever, for 'my patroneſs died about a month ſince, 'and we do not exactly know where 'Lord Moulton is at preſent: our furni- 'ture is reduced to what you ſee in theſe 'rooms, and all Mr. Atkinſon's depend- 'ence is, his writings, which, though they 'could afford him a genteel living, can- 'not aſſiſt him to pay the heavy ſums 'Mr. Flint exacts; nor can my little 'work in millinery and mantua-making 'add much to our income.'

Thus

Thus ended the hiſtory of Mrs. Atkinſon, and with it all my expectations; for I was ſo much affected with the ſtory I had heard, that I was determined at once to quit the author of ſuch complicated miſchief, though I taſted only a morſel of bread a day, and drank the pure element for ſuſtenance.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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